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SPECIAL ISSUE--- CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF CAPTAIN AMERICA®
FEATURING EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEWS WITH CAP'S CREATORS--
JOE SIMON
AND
JACK (KING) KIRBY!
PLUS: STAN LEE'S
VERY FIRST STORY FOR MARVEL--STARRING CAP!
ALSO: CAP'S CINEMATIC CAREER FROM THE 40's TO TODAY!

STAN LEE PRESENTS
MARVEL AGE®

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Just last issue I had the happy honor of acknowledging that MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE had won Favorite Publication About Comics in CBG's Fan Awards, for the second year in a row. Just the other day, Tom DeFalco, Marvel's Main Man, informed me upon his return from London, England that MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE has also won the ultra-prestigious Eagle Award for Favorite Specialist Comics Publication for 1989. The Eagle Awards are voted for and presented on behalf of the comics fans of Great Britain. To say that we're stunned and honored would be an understatement. On behalf of everyone working on MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE, we thank everyone who has voted for us, and hope that we continue to prove worthy of these honors.

Along those lines, I think we've put together quite a blockbuster issue this month. To celebrate Cap's big fiftieth anniversary, we managed to interview both of Cap's creators, Jack (King) Kirby and Joe Simon. Recently I wrote an introduction to the CAPTAIN AMERICA trade paperback (re-presenting the Roger Stern, John Byrne, Joe Rubinstein CAPTAIN AMERICAs I edited ten years ago) in which I blathered a bit about ol' Cap, so I don't want to repeat any of those precious pearls of Cap wisdom. Instead I wanted to say a few words about Jack Kirby.

No matter what you may have read elsewhere to the contrary, we at Marvel recognize the awesome contribution Jack has made to the creation of the Marvel Universe. Jack, along with Stan (the Man) Lee, created the characters and comics style which is synonymous with Marvel Comics. Jack's work continues to be a vital part of Marvel Comics today. For example, the MARVEL MASTERWORKS series continues to re-present examples of Klassic Kirby Komics such as THE FANTASTIC FOUR, THE INCREDIBLE HULK, THE AVENGERS, and added this year, CAPTAIN AMERICA, featuring the Cap

(continued on inside back cover)

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MARVEL NEWSWATCH

ITEM! "It's like history in the making!" That's how editor Mike Rockwitz described the triumphant return of "Rascally" Roy Thomas to CONAN THE BARBARIAN and SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN, two titles Roy helped create lo those many moons ago. "I missed it, " Roy said. "I've always had a warm spot in my heart for Conan. I have hundreds of books on history and ancient civilizations. I like to read about that kind of stuff. I guess you could say that in the last ten years,

Conan the Barbarian © 1990 Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc.

I've always been preparing to do Conan again. I found it impossible to resist."

Roy did resist returning to Conan for ten years since he first left the character, but when the opportunity to write the two books came up, he jumped at the chance. "We want to try to get a little bit of that magic back," Roy said.

For years, Roy refused to come back to Conan unless he could write both Conan titles. "I didn't just want to be one of two Conan writers. I wanted to be the only Conan writer." Originally, Roy was set to take over SAVAGE SWORD, with Michael Higgins continuing his 'Young Conan' saga in the pages of the color mag. But then Mike H. left CONAN THE BARBARIAN, leaving Roy free to take on both books.

Roy has not kept up with Conan in the past decade, so he had a lot of back issues to catch up on! "Mike (Rockwitz) sent me all the back issues, and I had (Conan historian) Jim Neil write a chronology for me. We're saying that everything that happened after I left the book took place in a 2-3 year period. We're picking up the continuity a little after CONAN THE BARBARIAN #115, which was my last issue."

For the first time, there will be continuity between CONAN and SAVAGE SWORD. As Roy noted, "It will be a real trick to coordinate, because there never has been any coordination between the two books." When Roy first wrote Conan, the character actually aged one year for each year of real time that went by; thus, Roy took the character from age seventeen to his late twenties. Roy will be picking up exactly where he left off, with Conan once again being about 30 years old.

Conan the Barbarian © 1990 Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc.

Stories in SAVAGE SWORD will play off of events from the regular CONAN comic. "SAVAGE SWORD will show side adventures that happened between issues, or past or future meetings with characters from CONAN THE BARBARIAN. Expect to see a variety of stories in SAVAGE SWORD, with tales ranging anywhere from Young Conan to King Conan; there may even be some untold tales of Conan and Belit's adventures on the Black Coast. CONAN THE BARBARIAN, will, as before, carry the main continuity of the character.

Roy's first story in CONAN THE BARBARIAN will be an adaptation of the Robert E. Howard classic, "Black Colossus," which is "the next story in the continuity that has never been done in the color comic." Although "Red Nails" was previously adapted in SAVAGE SWORD, this time it will be done from different angles. The story details Conan and his friends fighting in a mercenary army against an evil

MARVEL® TRIVIA QUIZ

As I write these words, our country is celebrating its independence—it's the Fourth of July! What better inspiration for a trivia quiz about Captain America? Since this issue won't reach you till early fall, though, you won't have fireworks outside to get you in the star-spangled mood . . . so try putting some John Philip Sousa marches on the turntable, and if all else fails, check the quiz answers on page 32!

—*Brian Nelson*

1. Cap and Diamondback took part in the Bloodstone Hunt with the aid of what artifact from the skeleton of Ulysses Bloodstone?
   A) hand
   B) skull
   C) rib
   D) nose

2. Who did NOT accompany Steve Rogers on his cross-country travels as the Captain?
   A) Dennis Dunphy
   B) Sam Wilson
   C) Arnold Roth
   D) Priscilla Lyons

3. Which nemesis brought together Captain America and Captain Britain?
   A) Flag-Smasher
   B) Modred the Mystic
   C) Dreadknight
   D) Maggie Thatcher

4. Cap's former girlfriend, Bernie Rosenthal, was an unabashed fan of:
   A) Donny and Marie
   B) the Chicago Cubs
   C) 2 Live Crew
   D) professional wrestling

5. When Cap's name was bandied about as a Presidential candidate, which Avenger urged Cap to consider running?
   A) the Vision
   B) Starfox
   C) Mantis
   D) She-Hulk

6. What was the white supremacist group responsible for the death of Cap's fiancee, Sharon Carter?
   A) the Watchdogs
   B) the Sons of the Serpent
   C) the National Force
   D) the Captain America Revenge Squad

7. One of Captain America's most devious foes was the Committee to Regain America's Principles, and its head:
   A) Karla Sofen
   B) Quentin Harderman
   C) Jack Monroe
   D) John Ehrlichman

8. Cap and the Falcon saved Harlem from racial riots that were instigated by the Red Skull under what alias?
   A) Stone-Face
   B) Teacher
   C) Nighshade
   D) Spike

9. When Steve Rogers worked as a police patrolman, he reported to which immediate superior office?
   A) Sgt. Duffy
   B) Sgt. Muldoon
   C) Sgt. Fury
   D) Sgt. York

10. In order to discover the secret of the Fourth Sleeper, Cap's girlfriend Sharon Carter posed as the evil:
    A) Countess Caution
    B) Irma Kruhl
    C) Pepper Potts
    D) Natasha from the Bullwinkle cartoons

11. When Captain America first left the Avengers, whom did he nominate as his replacement?
    A) Hawkeye
    B) Mantis
    C) the Black Panther
    D) John Steed

12. All of these heroes also once wore the helm of Captain America, EXCEPT:
    A) Spirit of '76
    B) the Patriot
    C) the Super-Patriot
    D) the Fighting American

sorcerer. And wait till you see who Conan's friends are! The storyline will be done as a three-issue mini-series within a series called "The She-Devil and the Sorcerer." Roy stressed that this time, the story will be told from the point of view of the evil sorcerer and his agents, and that "essentially we're adapting a short story into a lengthy novel."

Roy plans on showing Conan's adventures as one of the Free Companions, "which have never been covered in detail." Expect to see lots of old friends showing up in SAVAGE SWORD, such as Red Sonja, Jenna, and Zula—and some old foes as well, like Thoth-Amon, and possibly even Thulsa Doom! Roy will also be doing a Young Kull back-up in SAVAGE SWORD with E.R. Cruz. "We'll start with Kull's birth, then follow him as he becomes a galley slave, an outlaw, a gladiator . . . we'll show his entire life in detail."

Roy is also working on a new Conan/Red Sonja graphic novel, coming soon. The novel may even feature King Kull, as well. Looks like we're in for some savagely good reading, by Crom!

ITEM! It's time once again to check out the standings of the Mighty Marvel softball team, the Punishers. As you'll recall, team captain Evan Skolnick has vowed to eat a softball if Marvel does not sweep our three games against the DC Bat-Men this year. So far, Marvel has won the first DC game. The Punishers' record stands at 3-2 as these words are being written, but there are still two DC games to go!

Who will win the climactic clash of comic book companies? No one can say for sure, but Evan noted, "I've been looking through the Softball Cookbook for different ways to prepare a softball."

ITEM! Next month, it finally happens! The BIG fiftieth anniversary issue of CAPTAIN AMERICA! You've read the Cap trade paperback . . . you've thrilled to Cap's various Marvel Masterworks editions . . . you've breathlessly anticipated the Cap four-issue bookshelf prestige series . . . Now here comes the most spectacular Cap book yet—the triple-sized 50th anniversary issue of Cap's own mighty mag!

The lead story will be by Cap's regular creative team of Mark Gruenwald and Ron Lim, and will feature Cap's monu-

PROFILE: RON LIM

Marvel freelance credits (past): PSI-FORCE, DAREDEVIL, FANTASTIC FOUR, EXCALIBUR, WHAT IF, MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS (CYCLOPS), SOLO AVENGERS, THOR (Back-ups)
Marvel freelance credits (present): SILVER SURFER, CAPTAIN AMERICA, CONAN THE BARBARIAN, THANOS QUEST

My place of birth is: Marysville, California
People who knew me in high school thought I was: Confused
My hobbies are: Watching movies, buying CD's, reading, and of course, drawing.
My pet peeves are: Rude people, dorky people, stupid people, smelly people, and so on.
My favorite performers are: Arsenio Hall, Eddie Murphy, Michael Jackson, David Letterman, Steve Martin, Pee Wee Herman, Bart Simpson.
The last good book I read was: *"Gorgon Child"* by Steven Barnes.
The last good movie I saw was: *The Hunt for Red October.*
If they were making a movie of my life, I'd like to see my part played by: Steve Martin or Martin Short.
My oddest habit is: Something I'll never tell.
My greatest accomplishment outside the comics field is: Working at Pizza Hut!
The reason I got into comics was: Because my Mom wanted me to be a doctor!
The biggest influences on my work include: John Byrne, George Perez, Frank Miller, and far too many others to list.
The single work of which I am most proud is: The Thanos Quest bookshelf limited series.
My greatest unfulfilled ambition in the comics field is: Writing and drawing a project all by myself someday.
The worst part of my job is: I live like a vampire!
When nobody's looking I like to: Look at everybody.
The one thing I really want the world to know about me is: I'm a happy camper!

mental meetings with some of the greatest legends in American history. According to Assistant Editor Michael Heisler, some of the legends Cap will be meeting will be Paul Bunyan, John Henry, and Johnny Appleseed. Back-up stories in the issue will include Diamondback, Battlestar, USAgent, and other figures who've contributed to Cap's legacy over the past fifty years.

Face it pilgrims—if you can only buy one fifty anniversary issue this month, this is the one!

ITEM! What would you call a comic that has no super heroes, no mutants, no aliens, and no talking ducks?

How about HOLLYWOOD SUPERSTARS? That's the name of the new Hollywood-based detective series by Mark Evanier and Dan Spiegel, coming your way this month (and every month) from Epic Comics. The Hollywood Superstars are detectives who handle show business cases for studios who want things handled with no publicity. The Hollywood Superstars team consists of Leo Harvey, an aspiring stand-up comedian/impressionist, Jerry Nailor, a former stuntman, and Melody Blake, an actress.

Evanier brings to HOLLYWOOD SUPERSTARS his extensive experience in the television field. Every story in Hollywood Superstars is based on Evanier's real life experiences in Hollywood. "It's a serious adventure book about people. No matter what I write, I write people stories; unless I'm writing GROO, in which case I write idiot stories."

Evanier added that HOLLYWOOD SUPERSTARS would have elements of humor in it, "since real life is humorous."

Each issue of HOLLYWOOD SUPERSTARS will contain "danger, excitement, sex appeal . . . everything you find on your average day in Hollywood." The story in the first issue finds the Hollywood Superstars investigating the death of a race car driver. Was it an accident—or murder? That issue also shows how Melody meets the

YOU THINK I AM BEAUTIFUL, LEO? YOU THINK I AM THE KIND OF GIRL YOU DREAM ABOUT?--
--NOT THE KIND OF GIRL YOU USED TO MAKE FUN OF BACK AT SCHOOL--?
M-N-NO... I MEAN, HECK... I MEAN...
RRRING
EXCUSE ME A SECOND, MY DEAR...
HELLO?
HOW, WHAT DO I DO? IF ONLY LEO WERE HERE! HE'S THE ONE WITH THE TRICKY MIND...

Hollywood Superstars TM and © 1990 Mark Evanier and Dan Spiegle. All rights reserved.

others and joins the team. Future issues deal with a serial killer of homely fat guys, a stunt coordinator whose students maim and kill themselves, and the murder of a host of a hidden camera TV show.

Evanier said that he and artist Dan Spiegle are "the only real writer/artist team in comics. We've been working together for over 20 years, for six different comic companies." Evanier had high praise for Speigle, calling him "the best artist working in comics today, especially for this type of material. He is very highly regarded by industry professionals. No one can draw LA the way Dan can." GROO colorist Tom Luth will be coloring HOLLYWOOD SUPERSTARS, and Groo himself may make occasional appearances in the backgrounds.

Alert readers will recognize some of their favorite Hollywood stars walking around in the background as well. Each issue of HOLLYWOOD SUPERSTARS will contain a 6-page "Show Business" essay in the back, detailing some of Evanier's unbelievable experiences working in television.

So if you're looking for a change from your standard super hero fare, you might want to give HOLLYWOOD SUPERSTARS a try. It's hard-hitting detective action, with a touch of reality thrown in. As Mark put it, "People would be amazed if they knew how true most of these stories are!"

MARVEL® TOP TEN

A listener from Fort Lee, NJ, writes, "Dear Casey, I'm sending you a long-distance dedication, since this is the only way I know how to reach you. I am fed up with your obsession with top ten lists, and music trivia, and boring stories about how rock groups started out. I am leaving you, and taking the kids with me. I'm putting both feet on the ground, and throwing my hands up in the air. Your loving wife, Jean." Well, Jean, thanks for writing. Always happy to hear from one of our loyal listeners. Even though you didn't make any requests, it is with great pleasure that we present for you now the Top Ten Marvel Titles with the most subscriptions, as compiled by our Kathy Beekman, our Vice President/Subscriptions.

1. X-MEN
2. AMAZING SPIDER-MAN
3. G.I. JOE
4. X-FACTOR
5. WOLVERINE
6. WEB OF SPIDER-MAN
7. SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN
8. THE AVENGERS
9. IRON MAN
10. EXCALIBUR

MARK'S REMARKS

For my money, he's the fifth great archetypal character in the comics medium. First there's Superman, that all-powerful benevolent cosmic immigrant. Then there's Batman, the brooding self-made vengeance seeker. Third, there's Wonder Woman, the clay statue who becomes an inspiration to women everywhere (don't ask me how or why, I didn't make it up). Fourth, there's the original Captain Marvel, the big-muscled fantasy/wish fulfillment stand-in for every boy who's ever been picked on by somebody bigger.

And finally there's Captain America. Some people dismiss him as merely the quintessential patriotic hero, a symbol of that collective abstraction we call America. Others say he's simply a super-soldier, a jacked-up human fighting machine. Still others say he's just a guy who lucked into a sweetheart deal: a perfect male body, a glamorous lifestyle, and terrific reflexes and a shield to make his dangerous line of work reasonably safe. I say some of these characterizations are short-sighted, others miss the point altogether.

To me Captain America is the ultimate self-made hero. The Super-Soldier Serum didn't make him what he is, the Super-Soldier Serum was just a tool he used to make himself all he could be. Even without it, I believe Steve Rogers could have made himself great—perhaps not in such an overtly physical way, but great nonetheless, the way a humanitarian or activist for human rights is great. Before he ever even heard of Project: Rebirth, Steve Rogers possessed the qualities and attitudes that he would later be in a position to publicly espouse once he had the physique that commanded attention. He was brave, had a great reverence for life, and a passion for freedom. I think freedom—free will—plays a bigger part in Captain America's conception than any of the four aforementioned archetypal heroes. Steve Rogers chose to be Captain America, and worked hard at defining just what a Captain America was.

Let's compare Cap with the four previous archetypes, shall we? Superman didn't have a choice to become super; he was born that way. He didn't have a choice what planet he'd crash-land on—his father made that choice for him. Chance delivered him into the auspices of the kindly Kents, who taught him American and Christian values. Upon growing up, it seems only logical that he would become a hero, a champion of his adopted world. His upbringing taught him it's the job of heavenly visitors to save the world and help mankind. It was no big decision for him to make, it was just something that superior beings naturally do. When you've got more power than anybody else, it doesn't take a lot of courage or determination to be a hero. I'm not denying Superman's value as a mythic character. But I am saying it's hard for me to identify with a guy who was born so special that greatness just naturally came to him. Superman is not a viable fantasy figure for those of us aware that we are native to Earth. Captain America, on the other hand is one of our own. There was nothing in his birth or his upbringing that demanded he choose a hero's path. But he did so anyway because he wanted to.

Let's compare Cap with Batman. In some ways Cap has more in common with Batman than Superman: both Cap and Batman are self-motivated orphans with great athletic abilities. Batman and Cap both chose to become heroes: no one forced them to. Both were single-minded in their dedication to transforming themselves into perfect physical specimens: Cap had the advantage of the physique-enhancing serum, but nature had dealt him a physically frail unathletic body that had to be compensated for. (Do you think an 18-year old Bruce Wayne, even if he hadn't been in physical training for the past six years, would have been classified 4-F by the Army as Steve Rogers had? I don't. I think Bruce Wayne was gifted with a naturally athletic body.) Batman and Cap are extremely motivated, some might say obsessive types. Batman is obsessed with vengeance upon the criminal element that took his parents from him; Captain America is obsessed with freedom, justice, and the American dream. Batman's obsession derives from the traumatic slaying of his parents. Cap's obsession . . . where does it come from? Cap's parents are incidental players in his legend. I'm not even sure they were even mentioned in the Forties canon of stories. Though his parents were later asserted to have died before he became Captain America, neither their lives nor their deaths seem to have had the profound influence that Batman's and Superman's parents had on them. The fact that external molders of internal values cannot be found in no way weakens Cap's mythic value. To the contrary, it enhances Cap's symbolism as a self-made man: it was he who defined the abstract values by which he would live. In final contrast, Batman's obsession is dark and death-affirming while Cap's is light and life-affirming.

Let's compare Cap with Wonder Woman. Despite her jumbled origins, Wonder Woman is supposed to be the ultimate female encompassing all feminine virtues: she is a role model for women. Cap, on the other hand, is not gender-specific: he is not supposed to symbolize the ultimate male. He has an ideal male form, but his inner virtues are not uniquely what our culture defines as masculine. Bravery is not a male trait, nor is intelligence, determination, or compassion. Cap and Wonder Woman have these attributes in common, they both stand for freedom and justice and compassion in their own way. But while Wonder Woman comes from a pacifistic society (in the comic's original twisting on the Amazon myth), Cap comes from a society thrust into world war. Each of them becomes a contradiction of terms: a compassionate warrior. I am not saying Wonder Woman is a lesser character because she is more of a woman's hero while Cap is more a people's hero. Our male-dominated culture being what it is, women may well need a hero all their own. The problem I have with Wonder Woman is akin to the problem I have with Superman: her specialness at birth virtually predetermines she will become a hero. While Superman was born an alien from an advanced civilization, Wonder Woman was not born a woman at all but a clay statue which was granted life and magical attributes by the Greek gods (according to the original accounts). This to me is not something a lot of young girls can relate to, and consequently detracts from Wonder Woman's value as a role model.

Finally let's compare Captain America with Captain Marvel. Both Captains have the same point of departure: young physically average or below average boys who become something far greater and more capable than themselves. The difference between the two is that while Steve Rogers chose to become Captain America and worked hard to make the concept of Cap work, Billy Batson stumbled upon the wizard Shazam who granted him the powers and altered form of Captain Marvel. (A case

(Continued on page 15)

Atomic Age™

1957. A time of leather jackets, urban paranoia, the cold war, and tail fins. Big-finned powder blue Chevrolets, to be exact. 1957. The dawn of the ATOMIC AGE.

Cut to a race of aliens called Drones who come from far-off Helix. The lives of the Drones are so horrendous that they've decided to commit genocide. A single cell on Earth holds the key to their mass suicide. As they seek it out, Nimbus, an emissary from Helix, has been sent to stop them.

These two diverse elements form the core of a new 4-issue series from Epic called ATOMIC AGE. It's written by Frank Lovece and illustrated by Mike Okamoto and Al Williamson, with Kevin Nowlan contributing cover art. While Frank is a newcomer to comics, he's no stranger to writing, having 3 books on television (including the definitive histories of *The Brady Bunch* and *Taxi*) under his belt, as well as countless magazine pieces. Mike is best known for his outstanding pencil work on *The Vampire Lestat* for Innovation comics. Mike is also painting the comic adaptation of noted science-fiction author Piers Anthony's book *On a Pale Horse* for Innovation. Al, of course, is an inker par excellence, whose work has spanned several decades, and currently graces John Romita, Jr.'s pencils on DAREDEVIL. The whole shebang is overseen by stalwart editor and snappy dresser Marc "Sinbad" McLaurin.

Frank is grateful to have Marc at the helm. "I'll paraphrase James Thurber: 'He edits best who edits least. Especially my stuff!'" said Frank. All kidding aside, one picks up on an almost infectious enthusiasm from everyone involved with ATOMIC AGE. Marc grins: "It's more '50's than the '50's! Everything down to the telephone poles has been researched, so it all looks very, very authentic." Frank reiterates this: "Every car, for example, is a real car.

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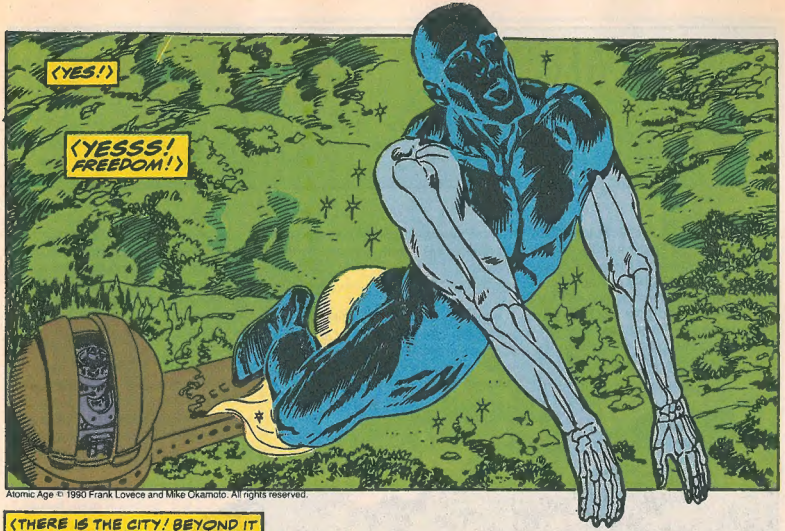

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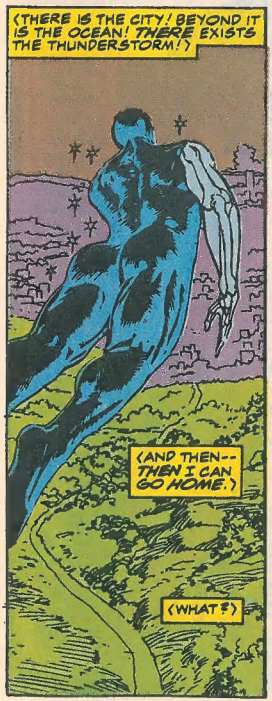


We have a drag race in one of the issues, and the cars are a '56 Dodge and a '57 Chevy!" But Mike puts the icing on the research cake: "We were going to put a Harley in the book, but my brother said that the kids back then couldn't afford a motorcycle as expensive as that, so most of them rode used Indian bikes like Marlon Brando did in *The Wild One*."

Aliens, drag strip girls, and lots of polished chrome. Quite an odd mixture for a comic. "I'm a great fan of LOVE & ROCKETS, the early issues of AMERICAN FLAGG, and good, old fashioned Stan Lee monster stories" confided Frank. ATOMIC AGE seems to consolidate all of these seemingly contradictory elements well: sophisticated but fun.

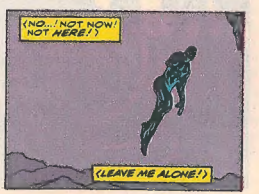
In the course of the four issues, we'll be introduced to some strong and well defined characters. Col. John Lear—once a fine, duty bound military man, now relegated to nursmaiding spoiled rich boys eager to finish their "military service." Jose Nunez—an up-and-coming reporter, relegated to the small-time rags, trying to impress the big-time movers and shakers. Jose's girlfriend, Nan—possibly the most beautiful girl to grace the pages of an Epic book. Finally, Nimbus—an enigmatic being on a strange mission that galvanizes them all together.

"Nothing is black-and-white in ATOMIC AGE" stated Frank. "The good guys are more than capable of doing bad, and the so-called bad guys. . .change." Nimbus would seem to be the catalyst. Frank continues: "Nunez sees Nimbus as his ticket to the big papers, and Col. Lear sees this real live spaceman as the perfect way to end his career on a high note." And what of Nimbus? Marc offers a clue: "As the series progresses, we see that Nimbus has changed. He's no longer just someone who blindly follows orders, he's become more self aware."

Mike Okamoto bears the responsibility of giving Frank's ideas form and life. Thankfully, this superb draftsman is more than equal to the task. "He's a solid storyteller," said Marc, "and his figures have immense character." "It's such a thrill to be working with Mike on this project," offered Frank. "And we do work together. He has just as much input on the book as I do." But the final word goes to Al Williamson: "I feel so lucky. Between Mike and John, Jr., Marvel has given me their best artists." No small praise, coming as it does from one of the masters.

So if beatniks, soda jerks, alien menaces, and Vitalis-slick hair served up in the '50's manner intrigue you, visit the ATOMIC AGE. Cool, man, cool!

—John Anthony Wilcox



BIRTH OF A LEGEND
JACK KIRBY TALKS ABOUT CAPTAIN AMERICA®

When MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE asked me to call on Jack Kirby, one of the few true giants of the comic book industry, and ask him a few questions about Captain America, my only response was, "And how much do you want me to pay you so I can do this?" Jack was courtesy itself as he discussed the character he co-created with Joe Simon, the star-spangled Avenger who celebrates his fiftieth anniversary this year.

—*Brian Nelson*

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: What were the circumstances at the time Cap was created, some fifty years ago? Where were you then, and what were comics like in those days?

JACK KIRBY: Comics at that time was a very primitive industry. Most talent in comics was coming from the poorer sections of the city—it was a sin to be poor for us back then. But as a young writer or artist, you didn't have the advantages to do business that businessmen had. You established yourself purely with talent.

MAM: How did you meet Joe Simon?

JACK KIRBY: Joe and I were both working free-lance and getting paid by comics publishers like Timely, which

WE'VE REACHED THE GROUNDS OF THE TAUREY ESTATE, MEN! COMBAT TEAM, STAY WHERE YOU ARE-- TECHNICIANS, FRONT AND FORWARD! WORK QUIETLY! WORK FAST! AND BE CAREFUL!!
EDITED, WRITTEN and DRAWN by JACK KIRBY
INKS: FRANK GIACOIA
letterer: JOHN COSTANZA
colorist: DON WARFIELD
CONSULTING EDITOR: MARV WOLFMAN
JK '842

was the name of Marvel Comics at that time, for whom we created Cap. We were both very young, I was about twenty at the time, looking for jobs, working various jobs in advertising and other things. You have to remember that Siegel and Shuster created SUPERMAN when they were just kids, and we were not all that much older ourselves—it's proof that the ordinary, average man can do great things.

MAM: what events led to the creation of Captain America?

JACK KIRBY: It was a time of deep passion. Hitler was grabbing all of Europe, we had Nazis in America, Nazis holding mass meetings in Madison Square Garden. It may be hard to know in your generation what it was like, the fervor about the War, and what was our country going to do about it. Captain America was created in that atmosphere, he was a natural outgrowth of the passionate mood of the country.

MAM: What was the initial reaction to Cap?

JACK KIRBY: He sold nearly a million copies, right off the bat, which was phenomenal for what was still a rather frowned-upon business, the business of comics.

MAM: It'd still be phenomenal today!

JACK KIRBY: But you know, your mother would be asking you rather suspiciously, "Just what kind of job do you have?" Comics were basically a local industry, and working in comics was considered really a radical thing to do.

MAM: The visual design of Captain America is obviously based on the flag, but how did his shield come about? Was it suggested or considered that Cap carry firearms, or more offensive weaponry of the type many new heroes carry today?

JACK KIRBY: There was no talk of other weapons; Captain America was a defender of liberty.

MAM: Not an aggressor like, for example, the Punisher.

JACK KIRBY: Now his shield, originally, was triangular; but that didn't last too long in that shape. It became circular so that he could throw it and provide for better action sequences.

MAM: Do you see Captain America as having changed over the years?

JACK KIRBY: Well, obviously the writers and artists change; the young people drawing today have their own dynamic style. But Cap himself hasn't really changed; if anything, he has improved.

MAM: He's one of very few characters whose costume hasn't altered over the decades.

JACK KIRBY: Every character that Joe and I put in the Captain America series was created to make a distinct

impression on the public. Cap did well, always does well, because from the beginning he was primed for sales.

MAM: Of course, one of the characters you created for Cap is also one of the few characters in comics to be killed and stay dead. Was there ever any talk of bringing back Bucky Barnes?

JACK KIRBY: No, although speaking completely for myself, I wouldn't mind bringing Bucky in; he represents teenagers, and there are always teenagers, he's a universal character.

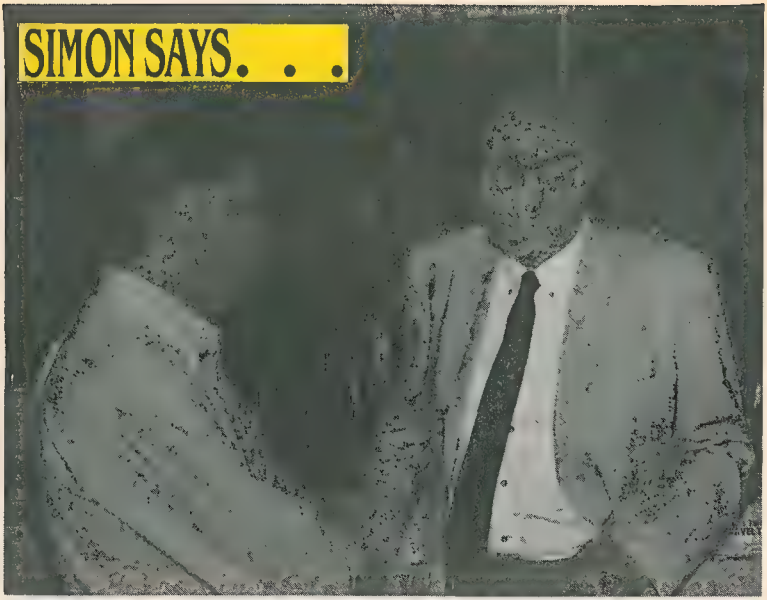
MAM: How does it feel seeing Captain America still going strong after 50 years, and about to be released in his own movie?

JACK KIRBY: How do you feel about Robin Hood? Joe and I were right; we did create a lasting character. Every good character endures, and Captain America might still be read in 2231.

MAM: How do you answer those people who might say that the patriotism Captain America represents is outmoded, the Nazis are gone, and so the character isn't relevant anymore?

JACK KIRBY: The Nazis may be gone, but we do have problems in the world for Captain America to face. There's the problem of the homeless, which is a major concern in this country . . . there's the drug crisis. These things warrant a lasting place in Captain America. What it comes down to is, Captain America is always a timely character, because he provides an occasion for a good storyteller. As long as you have a good story to tell, Captain America will endure.

SIMON SAYS. . .



Joe Simon is something of a comic book legend. Together with Jack Kirby, he created Captain America . . . the Boy Commandos . . . the Fighting American . . . and scores of others. The pair also created the entire genre of romance comics. Over the years, Joe has worked on a vast array of characters—from such popular fare as the original Captain Marvel, to more obscure creations like Prez and Brother Power the Geek. Joe's impressive career in comics spans over five decades.

Recently, Joe was kind enough to invite a group of MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE staffers and associates over to his studio in New York City for the purposes of this interview. In attendance were editor Jim Salicrup, assistant editor Tom Daning, Spider-Man assistant editor Dan Cuddy, and your own humble correspondent, "Big" Barry Dutter. We all jumped at the chance to meet Joe, who, at 76, still looks hale and hearty, and is possessing of a razor-sharp wit.

Joe showed us some of the original artwork in his collection, including some old science-fiction stories from the fifties, drawn by the likes of Jack Kirby, Al Williamson, Angelo Torres, and others, which he hopes to reprint in a hardcover book. Joe also proudly displayed some of his own original artwork, and his tattered, bagged copies of the first few issues of CAPTAIN AMERICA!

Joe shared with us many amusing anecdotes and fascinating stories about his career in the comics industry. He came across as a funny, talented man, happy to answer any questions we had about his long career. All present were thrilled we had the opportunity to meet Joe. All told, we spent over three hours with the creator of Captain America, and, if we didn't have to get back to the office, we would've stayed for three hours more. It was a very memorable afternoon, and we're grateful we had the chance to meet Joe. It was an enlightening experience. Here's what Joe had to say.

What goes into the making of a living legend?

That's the question we posed to Joe Simon, creator of Captain America. It was fifty years ago this month that Captain America first appeared, bursting on the scene in all his star-spangled glory. When Cap was first created, America hadn't even entered World War II yet, but the winds of war were in the air. It was clear that America's participation in this war was unavoidable. It was only a question of when.

Joe Simon couldn't wait for America to declare war. He was declaring his own war against the forces of tranny and oppression. But it was a war that would be fought in the arena Joe knew best—on the printed page.

As the spread of Nazism continued throughout Europe, Joe saw that something had to be done. America needed a way of getting involved, even if only symbolically. Joe decided to create a champion; a super-patriot; someone for people to rally around and cheer. We needed someone who could walk up to Adolf Hitler and punch him right in the face. That man was . . . Captain America.

Not many comic characters last for fifty years. It takes something special to make a four-colored super hero last. There has to be that extra spark of inspiration; those unique elements—whatever they may be—that make a hero endure. Captain America has that special magic. Cap is one of the great super hero archetypes. He was one of the first patriotic heroes, and the one who outlasted all the others. Along with the Human Torch and the Sub-Mariner, he is one of the three Marvel heroes still going strong fifty years later. Joe told us how he first came up with the idea of Cap.

In 1940, Joe was editor of the Marvel line of comics, which was then called Timely. Publisher Martin Goodman saw how well Superman and other super heroes were doing over at DC, and told Joe to come up with a new super hero of his own. Joe says that in creating this new super hero, the first thing he did was to try to find an ap-

propriate villain. "I was looking for great villains," Joe began. "I came up with the best villain of them all — Adolf Hitler, who was hated by everyone in the free world. Then I tried to think of a super hero that would fight him."

That super hero was Captain America. Joe drew some initial sketches of Cap's costume, and then worked out details of the character with Martin. It was decided to give Cap his own mag —the first time a new character was given his own series without appearing in an anthology book first. (The Human Torch and the Sub-Mariner, who preceded Cap, first appeared in MARVEL MYSTERY COMICS before being awarded their own mags.) Once Cap was approved, the time came to pick an artist.

At the time, Joe was working with an artist named Jack Kirby on a comic called BLUE BOLT. Joe wanted Jack to draw CAPTAIN AMERICA, but the people at Timely wanted to put a whole crew of artists on the book. "Martin was trying to talk me into doing a great effort on the art, to try to get the first issue out before Hitler got killed. Kirby was begging us to let him do the whole book. He was very unhappy about *the whole situation*."

Finally it was decided that Jack would pencil Cap, aided by inkers Al Avison and Al Gabriel. (The two Al's later took over Cap after Jack and Joe left the book.) Joe considers Jack a co-creator of Cap, because "if Kirby hadn't drawn it, it might not have been much of anything." Joe noted that he could take the same script, give one copy to Jack, one to another artist, and "Jack's script would come to life. The other guy's just died."

Joe recalls that Martin Goodman was initially opposed to the idea of using Hitler as the villain for Captain America. "It was both a curse and a blessing," Joe remembers. "By the time the first issue came out, *Hitler* could have been killed. Hitler was the first live villain to appear on a comic book cover." Martin agreed to use Hitler's likeness on the cover, as long as the art could be done as quickly as possible. The gamble paid off.

Captain America was a huge hit, right from the first issue, selling up to a million copies a month. As Joe put it, "The sales hit the roof on the thing." Cap spawned a host of imitators, none of them as successful as the original. Joe thinks the reason Cap took off right away was because it came out at just the right time. "It was definitely a matter of timing. The war was just heating up." In fact, Cap's creation pre-dated America's involvement in World War II by a full year. Once the U.S. actually entered the war, Captain America was assured even bigger sales.

Cap was so popular during the war that the comic spawned a fan club, the Sentinels of Liberty. But this wasn't just

CAPTAIN AMERICA
CASE No. 1
CAPTAIN AMERICA
U.S.A. ... 1941
AS THE RUTHLESS WAR-MONGERS OF EUROPE FOCUS THEIR EYES ON A PEACE-LOVING AMERICA... THE YOUTH OF OUR COUNTRY HEED THE CALL TO ARM FOR DEFENSE...
INDUCTION STATION
BUT GREAT AS THE DANGER OF FOREIGN ATTACK... IS THE THREAT OF INVASION FROM WITHIN... THE DREADED FIFTH COLUMN...
IT WAS EASY JOINING THE ARMY WITH THE FORGED PAPERS — NOW TO CARRY OUT THE FUEHRER'S PLANS!
YAH... EVERY-THING IS IN READINESS!
AMERICAN MUNITIONS INC.
by JOE SIMON and JACK KIRBY

any fan club—it was an organization designed to get kids to watch out for spies in their neighborhoods. "We wouldn't do something like that today," Joe said with a laugh. "The whole thing smacked of the Nazi youth. We were really out of our minds."

CAPTAIN AMERICA #1 introduced frail Steve Rogers, the army reject who would become the Star-Spangled Avenger. (The name for Cap's alter ego came from the army terminology for "Okay."—"Roger.") Joe feels the origin of Captain America is actually "the weakest part about the character. They just gave him a shot. We really didn't put too much thought into the origin. We just wanted to get to the action."

The issue also introduced two of the most enduring characters from Cap's world: Bucky Barnes and the Red Skull.

Bucky was created because "we liked for the hero to have someone to talk to," Joe said. "Otherwise they would just talk to themselves. Most of the other super heroes had teen sidekicks. Superman didn't, but he had other people to talk to. Mostly, Bucky was brought in as a way of eliminating too many thought balloons.

Bucky was also seen as a character for young readers to relate to. "Comics were seen basically as a kids' medium. That's why we did so many books for kids then—NEWSBOY LEGION, BOY COMMANDOS, YOUNG ALLIES. In those days, there were a lot more kids reading comics. Those were different days."

The name "Bucky" came from a member of Joe's high school basketball team. "There was a guy on the team named 'Bucky' Pierson, and he was also called 'Corky.' So when it came time to pick a name for Cap's sidekick, 'Bucky' is the name we went with."

The Red Skull has no antecedent in Joe's life. "We just thought it was an interesting visual, that's all. It was a skull, and we colored it red. It was something good to draw."

Cap's shield is another part of the Cap mythos that was with him right from the start. "When I was a kid, we used to play with garbage can lids, using them as shields. We would throw stones at each other, and defend our-

CAPTAIN AMERICA AND IVAN THE TERRIBLE
IN THE THRONE ROOM OF HIS CASTLE, IN THE FAR OFF REGIONS OF SIBERIA, SITS IVAN THE TERRIBLE, KING OF THE TARTARS. AFTER STEALING THE KINGDOM BY FORCE, HE RULES HIS SUBJECTS WITH AN IRON HAND!
KNOW YOU DOGS THAT KING IVAN IS ABOUT TO HOLD COURT AND GIVE ALL CAPTIVES AND CRIMINALS A FAIR TRIAL!

selves with garbage can lids. So we decided to give a shield to Cap."

Observant fans will note that in his first issue, Cap's shield was triangular, but by issue two, it was switched to the round version that is still used by the Sentinel of Liberty today. This was done because when Cap first came out, there was another character published by Archie Comics called the Shield, who had a triangular shield that he wore on his chest. When he saw the similarity between the Shield's shield and Cap's shield, Archie publisher John Goldwater "threw a tantrum," according to Joe. "The thing he was most upset about was that our sales were surpassing his, even though his book came first. He threatened to sue us, so we made it a round shield instead."

Oddly, this was not the last dealing Joe had with John Goldwater. As Joe recounts, "19 years after that, John Goldwater came to Jack and me and asked us to do two super heroes for him. He sensed that super heroes were coming back—this was in 1959. I did THE FLY for him, and I also did another book called THE DOUBLE LIFE OF PRIVATE STRONG, who was the new Shield, revised and rejuvenated. Ironically, after two issues, Harry Donenfeld over at DC asked us to stop doing the Shield. He said the Shield was a copy of Superman!"

Joe wrote only the first two issues of CAPTAIN AMERICA. After that, Joe stayed on as editor, and the book was turned over to others to write. Joe has never written Cap since, and says he has no desire to do so. In fact, Joe noted that he has not even read a Captain America comic in the nearly fifty years since he left the book!

After the first ten issues of CAPTAIN AMERICA, Joe and Jack began negotiating a deal at DC Comics. The pair felt they were not being paid enough by Timely, so they departed for higher salaries at DC. Jack was destined to return to Cap in the sixties, and again in the seventies. Joe walked away and never looked back. To this day, Joe has no regrets about leaving Cap behind.

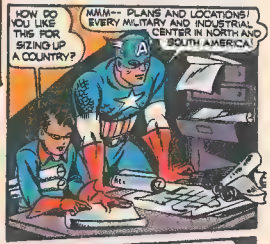
One common assumption often made by people outside the comics field is that Stan Lee created Cap, or wrote his early issues. Joe is quick to dispel this myth. Joe pointed out that Stan Lee never wrote Cap during the forties. "Stan just wrote the two-page text stories for each issue, and the only reason we had those is because we had to have two text pages to get second-class mailing permits. Stan was just this kid who would just sit in the corner playing his flute all day and bothering everybody."

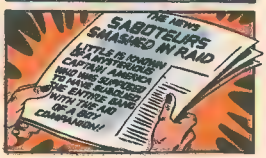
Over at DC, Jack and Joe created a number of series, most notably the BOY COMMANDOS, which, according to Joe, "was the biggest thing in the war, bigger than Captain America! It lasted all through the war."

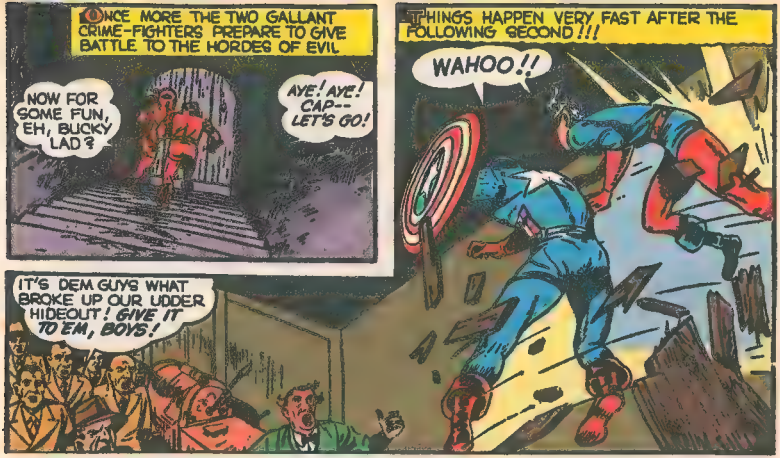
When asked about the reaction to Cap during the war, Joe commented, "Cap was almost pre-war. During the war, the Boy Commandos were our big hit. They were the hottest thing in comics. But Cap always sold well. Kids were just eating this stuff up."

Joe notes that he and Jack Kirby were "the only team that had more than one hit *series during the war*. We had several #1 hits — CAPTAIN AMERICA, BOYS' RANCH, YOUNG ROMANCE — which lasted for thirty years. We did other things for DC — Manhunter, Sandman — which had the biggest sales of them all.

"We were so hot that for the first time in comics, the creators got their names


HOW DO YOU LIKE THIS FOR SIZING UP A COUNTRY?
MMM-- PLANS AND LOCATIONS! EVERY MILITARY AND INDUSTRIAL CENTER IN NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICA!


THE NEWS
SABOTEURS SMASHED IN RAID
LITTLE IS KNOWN ABOUT CAPTAIN AMERICA, WHO HERE SURPRISES TO HAVE SURVIVED THE ENTIRE WAR WITH NO MORE THAN A BOY COMMANDO!


ONCE MORE THE TWO GALLANT CRIME-FIGHTERS PREPARE TO GIVE BATTLE TO THE HORDES OF EVIL
NOW FOR SOME FUN, EH, BUCKY LAD?
AYE! AYE! CAP--- LET'S GO!
THINGS HAPPEN VERY FAST AFTER THE FOLLOWING SECOND!!!
WAHOO!!
IT'S DEM GUYS WHAT BROKE UP OUR UDDER HIDEOUT! GIVE IT TO 'EM, BOYS!

on the covers in bold type. Before that, it had been simply DETECTIVE COMICS, or ADVENTURE COMICS. With us, it was SIMON & KIRBY'S MANHUNTER, SIMON & KIRBY'S SANDMAN, etc."

It is these later works of which Joe speaks most highly. "BOYS' RANCH, BOY EXPLORERS, STUNTMEN — that's our purest work." Simon and Kirby's classic BOYS' RANCH stories will be collected in a hardcover book from Marvel later this year.

One of Joe and Jack's less-successful creations was the Fighting American. In the mid-fifties, Captain America underwent a revival at Timely, of which Joe and Jack were not a part. Fighting American was their attempt to do Cap for another company.

Fighting American's first issue was a serious comic about a super hero created to fight the growing threat of communism. But when communist witch-hunter Senator Joe McCarthy was exposed in court, Jack and Joe suddenly switched directions. Fighting American became a broad farce, almost a parody of the "Red Menace." The comic, which Marvel reprinted in hardcover last year, lasted only ten issues, and was truly ahead of its time.

One of Joe's lengthiest jobs in the comics field was his twenty-year tenure as editor of SICK MAGAZINE, (a parody mag a la MAD). Joe notes that he "never really left comics. I used comic book artists on SICK, and did satires on comics."

Joe notes that SICK was never canceled while he was on the mag. It was only after SICK was sold to Charlton that the magazine finally met its demise. As Joe put it, "Charlton didn't know how to do it. They didn't ask me to work on it. They only published it for half a dozen issues before it died."

Joe's latest project is a book all about his experiences during the Golden Age of comics. It's called *The Comic Book Makers*, and it's "about the people who started the comic book industry. It's full of entertaining anecdotes. It goes from 1939 to 1962," which were the years Joe was involved in the four-color comics biz.

The book features a generous selection of original Simon and Kirby artwork, including such characters as Captain America, Fighting American, and the Boy Commandos. Among the "comic book makers" of the book's title are Lou Fine, Al Capp, Jack Davis, and Milt Caniff, all of whom have their work represented therein.

The Comic Book Makers is 200 pages, with a 16-page full-color insert. It is available from Simon's publishing company, Crestwood Publications 2, for $18.95 (US) and $21.95 (Canadian). Their address is 330 W. 56 St., Suite 6M, New York, NY, 10019. The book went on sale in August.

The Comic Book Makers is just the first of many projects Joe has planned for his new publishing company. Ever the entrepreneur, Joe is always on the look-out for new books to publish, new ways of representing some of the classic artwork—both his own, and from other artists — that is in his possession. Joe is full of enthusiasm for his new publishing ventures, and quizzed us about the workings of the comics specialty sales market.

By the end of the day, it seemed like Joe was asking us as many questions as we were asking him. He seemed eager to find out the prospects of how well he could expect his book to sell. Joe asked us if we thought his proposed reprint of 1950s science-fiction stories might appeal to today's fans, and we all agreed it would. Joe was pleased by our response, happy to learn that fans are still interested in the work he did so long ago.

These days, it is apparent that the classic old work of Joe Simon and Jack Kirby will never go out of style. This year, interest in Captain America is at an all-time high. Joe's classic Cap work from the forties is being reprinted, and there are hosts of other Cap projects in the works—more than ever before! In addition, there is the slightly-delayed CAPTAIN AMERICA feature film. In looking back over his career, Joe does not feel that Cap is the best comic he and Jack Kirby ever worked on. "By far, Cap is not the best thing we've done. It was a *good* thing—but not the best. The best things were BOYS' RANCH. . . FIGHTING AMERICAN . . . and some of the science-fiction things we did in the fifties. They were spectacular. Cap was the *biggest* thing—but not the most successful thing for us."

Despite this, Joe feels that Captain America will always have a place in the hearts and minds of all true Americans.

"Cap's an icon. He'll go on forever."

—*Barry Dutter*

STAN'S SOAPBOX

Hi, Heroes!

They're out to destroy me! First, semi-sadistic Slim-Jim Salicrup keeps reprinting those ancient Willie Lumpkin strips which should'a been laid to rest years ago! Now, he decides to reprint the first "filler" I ever wrote—not exactly the one piece of literature by which I'd like history to judge me!

The reason I wrote it is, in the '30s and '40s a publisher couldn't legally call his comic book a "magazine" unless it contained a couple of pages of text with no dialogue balloons. I'm sure nobody ever *read* those pages, but we needed 'em to satisfy the law! The newest kid in the bullpen was stuck with the job of writing them—namely, an eager-beaver teenager named Stan batted 'em out between erasing pages, proofreading and fetching coffee!

But only a practicing sklug-head (to borrow a word from our upcoming MARVEL WORLD OF TOMORROW series) (Shameless plug!) like Salicrup would expose that corny little feature to the jaundiced eyes of Marveldom Assembled! Which is why I refuse to write this intro! I mean, a guy hasta have *some* standards!

Excelsior!

Stan Lee

CAPTAIN AMERICA® Foils the Traitor's Revenge

"I'm sorry, Haines, but there is no place in this army camp for the likes of you. You have lied, cheated, spied, and stolen. Your conduct is no longer tolerable and I'm giving you a dishonorable discharge. Now get out!"

Private Steve Rogers, doing sentry duty nearby, was watching the scene interestedly. He had never seen Colonel Stevens so angry: and Lou Haines, too, was threateningly mad. The muscular giant shook his enormous fist at the Colonel.

"O.K., Colonel," snarled Lou, "I'll get out. But let me warn you now, you ain't seen the last of me! I'll get even somehow. Mark my words, you'll pay for this!" Haines walked toward the camp gates, muttering insults under his breath.

Suddenly Haines felt a strong hand grasp his arm. He looked around into the flashing eyes of Steve Rogers! "I wouldn't act like that if I were you," murmured Steve, softly, "you were insulting a man in the uniform of the United States Army! Here are the camp gates; now beat it!"

Haines left, but there was a look of hate in his eyes which Steve could not help but notice!

Later that evening, Steve Rogers was sitting in his tent playing checkers with his young sidekick, Bucky, the camp mascot. Bucky looked disappointed.

"Gosh, Steve," wailed Bucky, "don't you EVER lose a game? I've forgotten what it feels like to win."

Steve smiled cheerfully. "I'll tell you what, kid: suppose you borrow a book on 'how to play checkers' and read it. That'll give me a chance to get some shuteye. You don't know how tired it makes me to beat you all the time!"

Steve ducked just in time to dodge the pillow that Bucky threw at him. "Why, you little squirt," he grinned, "I ought to put you over my knee!"

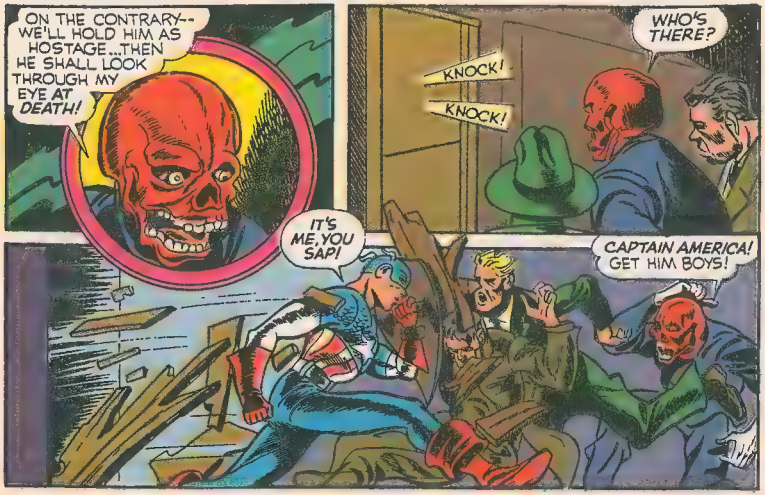
"Oh yeah, you big palooka? You and what army?" Bucky picked up another pillow and was holding it ready.

Suddenly Steve's smile left his face and he put his fingers to his lips. "Listen," he whispered.

Bucky put down the pillow and was silent. He knew that Steve's sensitive hearing must have detected something important! Then Steve spoke:

"There it is again, Bucky. Three pairs of footsteps outside Colonel Stevens' tent. We'd better look into this!"

In an instant both Steve and Bucky peeled off their outer uniforms, and


ON THE CONTRARY--WE'LL HOLD HIM AS HOSTAGE...THEN HE SHALL LOOK THROUGH MY EYE AT DEATH!
KNOCK!
KNOCK!
WHO'S THERE?
IT'S ME, YOU SAP!
CAPTAIN AMERICA! GET HIM BOYS!

seconds later they stood revealed as CAPTAIN AMERICA and BUCKY, Sentinels Of Our Shores! "Let's go!" cried CAPTAIN AMERICA!

The two trouble hunters stole from their tent and noiselessly trod to Colonel Stevens' quarters. Outside his tent were three tough-looking thugs!

"Will we all rush him at once?" asked the first. Captain America saw that the man he was talking to was Lou Haines. "You guys stay here and keep 'chickee'. I'll go in and tend to him myself!" Then Captain America noticed that Haines was holding a wicked looking knife in his hand!

"Not a second to lose!" cried the Red, White and Blue Knight as he raced toward the three assassins like an avenging hurricane.

Lou Haines was the first to see the twin-tornadoes rushing at him. "Take care of these two fancy-pants," he ordered his men, "I'll attend to the Colonel in a second!"

Haines's two accomplices grinned as they watched Captain America and Bucky speeding toward them. They took out their revolvers and prepared to fire. But Captain America suddenly picked up Bucky by his arms and swung him right into the two thugs knocking their guns out of reach. "All right, Bucky, m'lad," he cried, "see how brave they are without their toys!" Then he dashed into the tent.

Inside the tent the American Avenger saw Lou Haines about to plunge his knife into the sleeping Colonel's heart! There wasn't time for Captain America to reach Haines before the evil deed could be done. But with the speed of thought, he sent his shield spinning through the air to the other end of the tent where it smacked the knife out of Haines's hand!

Then the mighty crime-fighter leaped at Haines and landed a blow at his head. But the traitorous ex-soldier seemed to just shake off the blow and he grabbed Captain America by the throat with his tremendous fingers. As Haines forced more and more pressure into his grip, Captain America began to get weaker and weaker. His eyes grew dim and it became difficult for him to breathe. But he managed to summon all his remaining strength into one last effort, and brought his right fist up under Haines's jaw with enough force to fell an ox. No human being could have stood that blow, and Haines instantly relaxed his grip and sank to the floor—unconscious!

Outside the tent, Captain America found the other two crooks tied back-to-back, and Bucky was standing over them, patting their heads! "I do hope I wasn't too rough with them, Cap," said the gallant lad.

The next morning Colonel Stevens was talking with Private Rogers. "Rogers," he said, "this morning I found three men tied outside my tent with a note pinned on them reading: 'Regards from Captain America and Bucky.' Now you have the tent next to mine; did you hear anything last night?"

"No, Sir," answered Steve, "I was sound asleep."

"Asleep!" roared the Colonel, "Captain America and Bucky mopped up three armed men by themselves and saved my life—and YOU were asleep! Oh, why can't I have some soldiers like Captain America in this army—instead of YOU!"

But Colonel Stevens didn't notice the grin on Private Rogers' face as he left the tent!

WILLIE LUMPKIN

STAN AND DAN'S CLASSIC COMIC STRIP FROM THE FABULOUS FIFTIES

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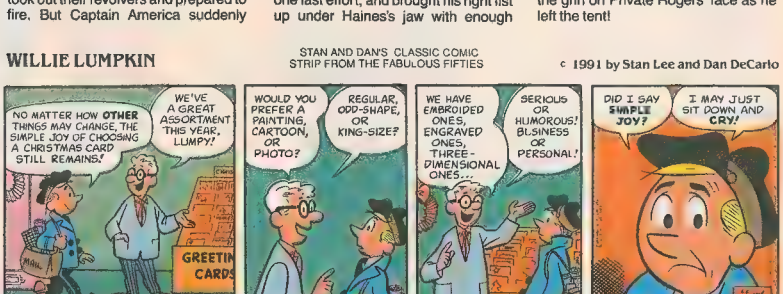

NO MATTER HOW OTHER THINGS MAY CHANGE, THE SIMPLE JOY OF CHOOSING A CHRISTMAS CARD STILL REMAINS.
WE'VE A GREAT ASSORTMENT THIS YEAR, LUMPY!
GREETIN CARDS
WOULD YOU PREFER A PAINTING, CARTOON, OR PHOTO?
REGULAR, ODD-SHAPE, OR KING-SIZE?
WE HAVE EMBROIDED ONES, ENGRAVED ONES, THREE-DIMENSIONAL ONES...
SERIOUS OR HUMOROUS! BUSINESS OR PERSONAL!
DID I SAY SIMPLE JOY?
I MAY JUST SIT DOWN AND CRY!

(Continued from page 5)

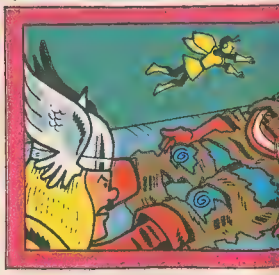
could be made that Billy was destined to find Shazam, which would simply throw him into the category of those born special.) Either way it was not something Billy chose or had to work for. But to a kid, it seems equally probable you'll meet a magic wizard as it is you'll be offered the chance to become a super-soldier. The difference is that Captain Marvel is a wish fulfillment figure for the kid who wants magic to do all the work, Captain America for the kid who doesn't mind doing a lot of the work himself. The Super-Soldier Serum may have enhanced Cap's body to its peak physical condition, but it didn't give him any fighting skills. Cap had to work out every day to maintain his physique and hone his battle techniques—Captain Marvel was powerful enough he never had to work out.

My point in this comparison of archetypes is not to convince anyone that Captain America is a better character or purer mythic figure than any of the other four discussed. My point is simply that Captain America is indeed a great archetype, distinct from all the others, and for an average American kid like I once was, the most relatable fantasy figure of the bunch. You had to be born on another world to be Superman. You had to have your folks killed to be Batman. You had to have been turned into a person by the Greek gods to be Wonder Woman. You had to find a wizard to be Captain Marvel. But Captain America. . .ah, all you had to do was be a very good person on the inside and work very hard every day at building up your body, and you too could become Captain America. What an equal opportunity fantasy. I guess it's no wonder I love the character so much. Fact is I wouldn't mind chronicling his adventures till he reaches his hundredth anniversary. Thank you, Joe and Jack, for this most marvelous hero.

—Mark Gruenwald

HAPPY FIFTIETH, CAPTAIN AMERICA®!

50 YEARS AGO, JOE SIMON AND JACK KIRBY INTRODUCED THEIR STAR SPANGLED HERO TO THE WORLD WITHIN THE PAGES OF CAPTAIN AMERICA #1. ALAS, I WASN'T AT THAT UNVEILING, BUT 27 YEARS AGO, WHEN STAN LEE AND JACK KIRBY RE-INTRODUCED THE GOOD CAPTAIN (ALBEIT IN THE GUISE OF A VILLAINOUS IMPOSTER BATTLING THE HUMAN TORCH) IN THE ONE HUNDRED AND FOURTEENTH ISSUE OF Strange Tales, WELL, THIS TIME I WAS THERE! AND I WAS ALSO THERE FOUR MONTHS LATER WHEN THE REAL CAP -- WHO HAD LITERALLY BEEN PUT ON ICE -- WAS FINALLY DEFROSTED FOR REAL IN THE CLASSIC FOURTH ISSUE OF THE AVENGERS. AND YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED? UNCLE SAM'S YOUNGER BROTHER HAS BEEN MY ABSOLUTE FAVORITE COMIC BOOK CHARACTER EVER SINCE, BAR NONE! WHY? WELL, ANY NUMBER OF REASONS, I SUPPOSE. HOW'S ABOUT THE FACT THAT, EVEN WITHOUT ANY SPECIAL POWERS OR ABILITIES, THE GOOD CAPTAIN IS THE PERFECT EMBODIMENT OF ALL THAT IS GOOD, ALL THAT IS NOBLE ABOUT THE IDEALS THAT THIS COUNTRY WAS FOUNDED UPON? BECAUSE WE ALL KNOW CAPTAIN AMERICA WOULD NEVER LIE, CAPTAIN AMERICA WOULD NEVER CHEAT, AND CAPTAIN AMERICA WOULD NEVER EVER PASS AN UNFOUNDED JUDGEMENT ON ANYONE. BECAUSE, YOU SEE, ABOVE ALL ELSE, CAPTAIN AMERICA STANDS FOR FAIRNESS! PLUS HE DOESN'T LITTER.



FRED HEMBECK SALUTES THE MAR

VELOUS ART OF JACK KIRBY !!

YOU NEED ANOTHER REASON FOR THE UNSTINTING HOLD STEVE ROGERS' ALTER EGO HAS OVER ME? WELL, HOW ABOUT ALL THE YEARS OF HIGH QUALITY WORK CHRONICLING CAP'S ADVENTURES WITH THE FOES OF THE AVENGERS, THE INVADERS, AND IN HIS OWN MAGAZINE BY A LONG AND BOUNTIFUL LIST OF SOME OF THE GREATEST TALENTS IN COMICS HISTORY? AND ON ANY SUCH LIST, FIRST AND FOREMOST WOULD BE CO-CREATOR JACK KIRBY, WHOSE HERCULEAN BRILLIANCE GUIDED THE STAR SPANGLED AVENGER THROUGH THE DECADES OF THE FORTIES, THE SIXTIES, AND THE SEVENTIES. THE SCENES RE-INTERPRETED HERE -- THE ORIGIN, THE IMPOSTER, THE DEFROSTING, THE SIDEKICK, THE SKULL, AND THE HOWLERS -- ALL SPRING FROM JACK'S FERTILE SIXTIES PERIOD THAT SO ENCHANTED MY YOUNG, IMPRESSIONABLE MIND. MAN! THOSE WERE SOME REALLY PRIMO COMICS! WE ALL HAVE A GREAT DEAL TO THANK JACK KIRBY FOR, BUT ME, I THANK HIM MOST OF ALL FOR CAPTAIN AMERICA! THANKS, JACK!

AS FOR SOME OF MY OTHER FAVORITE CAP CREATORS, WELL, IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER, THEY INCLUDE STAN LEE, MIKE ZECK, STEVE ENGLEHART, JIM STERANKO, JOHN BUSCEMA, SAL BUSCEMA, ROY THOMAS, FRANK ROBBINS, JOHN BYRNE, ROGER STERN, AND MARK GRUENWALD, TO NAME BUT A FEW.

CAP, FIFTY YEARS AREN'T NEARLY ENOUGH! KEEP 'EM FLYING FOREVER, BUDDY -- I SALUTE YA!

Welcome to a new MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE column, and one which I hope you'll enjoy. I've been covering the comic book TV/movie scene for a long time in my *Backstage* column for AMAZING HEROES, my *Behind The Camera* column for the British *Fantasia*, and now here, with *Reel Marvel* in the MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE.

Marvel has a rich history of television and movie adaptations of their characters, beginning all the way back in 1944 with the first *Captain America* serial (actually from Marvel's progenitors, Timely Comics). In this column, we'll focus on all of these projects, examining some in more depth than others, providing interesting asides and trivia, and giving exciting news on upcoming projects. Every now and then I'll focus on production of an upcoming movie/TV show such as *Spider-Man*, *Ghost Rider*, and *Captain America*, giving your insights into the making of the films or television shows.

This year being the good Captain America's 50th Anniversary and all, I thought I'd detail some of his celluloid past in this first column. *Captain America* first came to the screen in 1944, in a 15-chapter film serial made by Republic Pictures. A film serial was a short 15-20 minute film which played every week (usually Saturdays) in theaters. Before the age of television, children and adults would flock to the theater each week to see the latest chapter in their hero's exciting life. Until the final chapter each episode always ended in a spectacular and horrifying cliffhanger, and audiences had to come back to see how their hero escaped with his life next week.

Captain America was played by action star Dick Purcell, in what was to be his last role. Oddly enough, in this feature, Cap's secret identity was that of District Attorney Grant Gardner, who fought thugs and criminals in a post-World War II undisclosed future period. Cap's costume, though similar, lacked the wings above the ears and had high-top shoes instead of boots. Most importantly, Cap no longer carried a shield to fight crime, but was instead, very handy with a gun!

When Timely Comics complained about the changes to Republic, the movie studio responded that the reference material provided hadn't shown that Cap was really Steve Rogers and that he carried a shield! Timely wasn't in much of a position to argue, having literally given away the rights to a *Captain America* serial to Republic. Timely was banking on the serial for promotional appeal, rather than as a merchandising spin-off, and thus, hadn't charged Republic a cent for the rights. You won't see that happen now!

In the serial, Cap fought the evil machinations of Dr. Cyrus Maldor, also known as the deadly Scarab. The villain, played by long-time horror actor Lionel Atwill, initially played out his revenge by killing some of his colleagues with a deadly poison called "The Purple Death." Shortly after, he changed plans and began to threaten the world with the experimental "dynamic vibrator," later changing plans once again by utilizing a serum which brought the dead back to life! Eventually Captain America defeated him and sent him off, guilty, to the electric chair.

The serial, seen as a whole (it is now available on video), is an exciting, if ultra-violent, film. Once you've acclimated yourself to the changes in the *Captain America* mythos, you can

enjoy the film for the fast-moving and exciting ride that it is. *Captain America* is generally regarded as one of the better super hero serials ever produced.

Although the Sentinel of Liberty's serial did well in the theaters, Republic decided to get out of making super hero serials. This had been their most labor intensive and costly serial yet, with seven writers and a budget of $222,906, "only" $40,000 over the prescribed budget. Of course, today, that budget would barely start a film, but movies were much cheaper in those days.

Dick Purcell, who had done numerous strenuous stunts on the serial, died shortly after filming, of a heart attack brought on by the difficult activities. With no star and no plans for a sequel, Republic did their last in a string of odd moves. They re-released the serial, unchanged, as *The Return of Captain America*, and brought in yet more money.

The good Captain didn't reappear on any screen until 1965, when Robert Lawrence joined with Grant Simmons and Ray Lawrence to begin the animation company Grantray-Lawrence. Under a blanket title of *The Marvel Super Heroes*, the team recreated the adventures of Captain America, the Hulk, Iron Man, the Sub-Mariner, and the Mighty Thor. Each character had a six-minute cartoon adventure, with a total of 49 cartoons. Forty television stations across the country initially picked up the syndicated program.

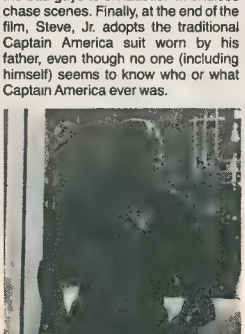
These cartoons were taken directly from the comic books of the day and I do mean directly. The figures were cut from the comic book and put on new backgrounds, without word balloons. Then, to simulate action, the figure would be moved across the screen or the camera would be jiggled or panned in and out. Sometimes lips would be animated when the character was speaking, and every now and then an eye would blink or a hand would move.

The mainstream of Captain America's adventures came from his series in *Tales of Suspense*, but many of them were re-worked *Avengers* stories, utilizing Cap as the hero instead of the whole team. Although taken directly from the comics, and thus, very faithful, these cartoons were (and are) the most limited animation ever offered on television. Thus, although they now have kind of a cult status and some episodes have been released by Prism Video, *The Marvel Super Heroes* show was soon lost to better shows.

Universal next picked up the rights to *Captain America* for what they hoped was going to be one in a string of Marvel super hero successes on CBS TV. *The Incredible Hulk* was already a ratings smash, the *Amazing Spider-Man* was doing moderately well (when it appeared), and only the *Dr. Strange* pilot had fallen off in ratings. Thus, on January 19, 1979, the two-hour *Captain America* film aired on CBS.

This time Captain America was Steve Rogers, Jr., the son of the original. Played by Reb Brown, Steve didn't want to do much other than paint and draw, but he eventually was given the F.L.A.G. (Full Latent Ability Gain) serum developed by his late fater. Working with Dr. Simon Mills (Len Birman) and Dr. Wendy Day (Heather Menzies), both government higher-ups, the new motorcycle riding hero thwarted the plans of a criminal mastermind who planned to blow up Phoenix with a neutron bomb.

The acting by most of the cast, especially Brown, was sub-par, and it took a full half of the film for Steve to even think about becoming Captain America. When he does, his initial costume is so radically different from the traditional one that it almost seemed to be another star-spangled character. Even with the clear red-striped plexi-glass shield which he carried on the front of his Ameri-cycle, Cap didn't see much hand-to-hand action, preferring to ride the bad guys to exhaustion in endless chase scenes. Finally, at the end of the film, Steve, Jr. adopts the traditional Captain America suit worn by his father, even though no one (including himself) seems to know who or what Captain America ever was.



This truly disappointing mishmash got awful ratings, but CBS wasn't ready to give up yet. They commissioned a second pilot, which aired in two parts, on November 23 and 24, 1979. This was alternately called *Captain America II* and *Captain America: Death Too Soon*, although some reference books also use the title *Return of Captain America*. Connie Sellecca replaced Menzies as Dr. Wendy Day (and later went on to become the girlfriend of the *Greatest American Hero*), and this time, noted horror actor Christopher Lee played the villain, Miguel. This show, slightly better than the previous attempt, found Cap fighting the mad scientist, Miguel, who has dastardly plans to release a serum which rapidly advances the aging process.

Once again, the ratings dropped off, and Captain America went back to the ice chest (ha ha). He appeared in several episodes of the 1981-1983 *Spider-Man and his Amazing Friends* show, later retitled *The Incredible Hulk and The Amazing Spider-Man* and then *The Amazing Spider-Man and The Incredible Hulk*. In one epidsode, "Pawns of the Kingpin" by Donald F. Glut, Cap teamed with Spider-Man and friends to fight Kingpin and Dr. Faustus, while in "7 Little Super-Heroes," Cap was joined by Shanna, the Sub-Mariner, and Dr. Strange, to track down the Chameleon.

Cap hasn't reappeared on the big or small screen since then, but his multi-million dollar movie is soon to see release. Summer and fall releases of 21st Century Film's *Captain America*, which stars Matt Salinger as Cap/Steve Rodgers and Scott Paulin as the Red Skull, have been pushed back as the stars go back to the studio for some reshoots and re-editing. We'll give you some more news on this one as we get closer to the premiere date.

Meanwhile, let me know what you'd like to see covered in this column. I do requests, and eventually I'm going to cover the entire pantheon of Marvel's TV and movie characters. Hope you had fun, and we'll see you next issue, along with a certain friendly neighborhood Spider-Man, back here at Reel Marvel.

It seems that hardly a day passes without a bundle of mail coming in telling us how great a new line of Marvel action figures would be and that we should get a new set out pronto! And many of those letters are by fans who have been lucky enough to get early action figures, toys and such things, some of which have turned out to be pretty valuable collector's items. For instance, did you know that the old Aurora model kits of Spidey, Hulk, and Captain America are each selling for over $200, that it costs hundreds of dollars to get the original Captain Action doll that could change into Spidey, Captain America, or Sgt. Fury, or that three of the Secret Wars action figures that came out in 1984, the Constrictor, Electro, and Iceman, are now being sold for over $150 each at conventions?

Well, obviously not everyone can afford to pay that kind of money for an action figure of his or her favorite Marvel super hero or super-villain. And, if you've seen the television ads, you'll know that thanks to the friendly folks at Toy Biz, you don't have to! Because on sale now is an all new line of Marvel Super Heroes action figures and vehicles!

There are eight action figures and two vehicles in the line with two dress-up kits and a Super Hero training Center planned for later release. The super heroes are Spider-Man, Captain America, the Incredible Hulk, Daredevil, Punisher, and the Silver Surfer. And because it wouldn't be any fun to have super heroes without super-villains, Dr. Doom and Dr. Octopus round out the line-up.

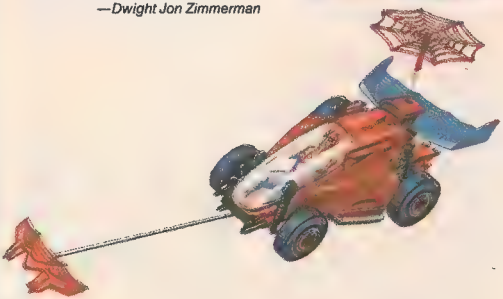
The posable figures are 4¾" high and each has its own nifty action feature. Spider-Man has suction cups on his hands so that he can stick to windows and walls. Captain America has a spring-loaded shield-launcher that attaches to his arm. The Punisher sports an arsenal of automatic hand weapons and has a cap firing mechanism in his backpack. The Incredible Hulk has movable arms and a "vise-like" grip so that he can "bend" an iron bar and crush a huge rock. The Silver Surfer can "fly" on his friction-powered surfboard. Daredevil has a spring-loaded grappling hook on his billy club so that he can climb up objects. Dr. Octopus has suction cups and grasping pincers on his tentacles. And Dr. Doom has two spinning "power" drills. You'll have a ball creating your own cataclysmic super hero vs. super-villain conflicts because the quality in the figures and their action features is top-notch. Not only that, but the detailing is really fine, for instance, each face and figure is distinct from the others. The Hulk is massive and menacing, the Silver Surfer proud and noble, Dr. Doom looks brilliant and sinister and the Punisher looks angry and determined. And you can even count each link in Captain Amenca's chain mail. As for the action features, Spidey really sticks to walls and windows, Daredevil can swing on the rope attached to his billy club's grappling hook, and watching the Silver Surfer zoom along on his surfboard does require you to imagine that he's soaring through space, but, hey, that's all part of the fun.

As for the vehicles, one's the Captain America Turbo Coupe and the other is the amazing Spider-Man dragster! The Turbo Coupe has a spring-loaded shield battering ram and a cockpit that pops open so that Captain America can "fly" away in his special jet-powered glider wing! The Spider-Man dragster has a clear plastic, hinged canopy so that Spider-Man can easily jump in or out but better yet, it has a secret weapon—a spring loaded spinner behind the cockpit that Spidey can shoot at any super-villain sneaking up from behind.

And best of all, unlike the collector's item models and figures which are both hard to find and expensive, these action figures are available in comic book shops and toy stores everywhere for a suggested retail price of under $10 each! And the vehicles retail for under $30. With Christmas right around the corner, that makes it real easy to get something special at an easy to afford price.

Now, we'd be remiss if we didn't tell you that this line is not a one-shot affair. If this debut line of action figures sells as well as we hope, in 1991 you can expect a line of mutant action figures featuring your favorite X-Men super heroes and super-villains! So let us know what you think! And have fun!

—Dwight Jon Zimmerman



CAPTAIN AMERICA®
THROUGH THE DECADES

Marvel executive editor Mark Gruenwald has written that there are very few conceptually perfect super heroes. One of those few, he says, is Captain America, the mythic American freedom fighter, the embodiment of humanity's passion for justice and desire for liberty. It's a little hard to believe that a classic hero like Captain America hasn't always been around. But there was a time when he did not exist. It was only fifty years ago that Captain America was created by two of the founding fathers of adventure comic books, Joe Simon and Jack Kirby.

Captain America first appeared in CAPTAIN AMERICA COMICS #1, which was cover dated March, 1941, but which went on sale on December 20, 1940, roughly a year before the United States officially entered World War II. This is important to remember, since the question of American involvement in World War II was still a controversial topic in 1940. Thus, Simon and Kirby were making a case for America joining the battle against Nazi tyranny by creating Steve Rogers, a young man whose determination to defend freedom led him to become America's own "super-soldier." Captain America was not the first patriotic hero in comics: the original Shield and Will Eisner's Uncle Sam had debuted only a short time before. But Captain America, the all-American G.I. who was the costumed embodiment of American ideals, was the one who captured the hearts of the American public.

Joe Simon and Jack Kirby only stayed on the book for ten issues, but they were classics (all being reprinted in a two-volume set this year by Marvel, as described elsewhere in this issue). Besides Cap himself, Simon and Kirby introduced his costumed sidekick, Bucky Barnes, and Cap's first love interest, special government operative Betty Ross. Presumably her name was inspired by Betsy Ross, designer of the American flag, and surely Stan Lee and Jack Kirby had the name in mind when it came time, decades later, to create a leading lady for THE HULK. The original version of the villainous Ringmaster first appeared in CAPTAIN AMERICA COMICS #5.

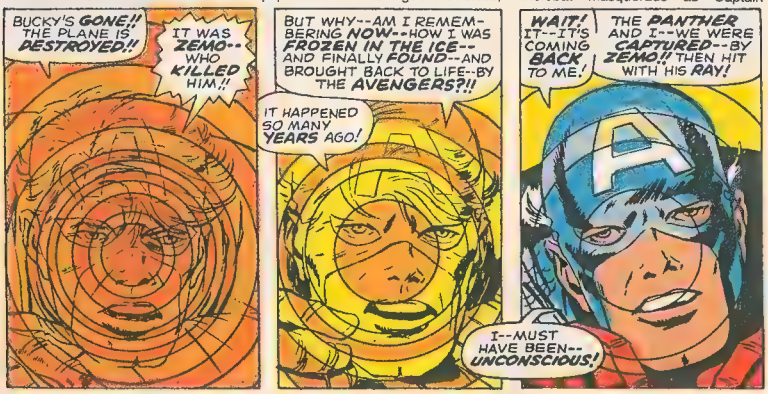
But you cannot tell the story of Captain America without also recounting the history of his perennial nemesis, one of comics' greatest villains, the Red Skull, whose blood-red death's head appearance incarnates both the horrors of Nazi tyranny and death itself. A villain by that name appears in the very first issue of CAPTAIN AMERICA COMICS. However, comics historian George Olshevsky argues persuasively that the Red Skulls in the earliest stories were mere impostors (since they are unmasked and look nothing like the true Skull). The first story that we can be certain features the real Red Skull appears in CAPTAIN AMERICA COMICS #7, cover dated October, 1941.

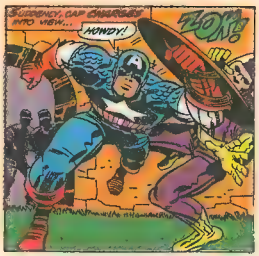
Captain America was immensely popular in the Golden Age of the Forties, appearing not only in his own comic book, but also in MARVEL MYSTERY COMICS #80-84 and #86-92, U.S.A. COMICS #6-17, ALL-SELECT COMICS #1-10 and a host of guest appearances in other comics. He was also a member of the All-Winners Squad, a team of Timely's leading heroes who appeared in ALL-WINNERS SQUAD COMICS.

But, as popular as super heroes were in wartime America, they could not sustain that interest into the 1950s. Virtually all super hero comics disappeared, and Cap suffered the new trend of horror comics, for its final two issues. The series was canceled with issue #75, cover dated February, 1950: Cap himself didn't even appear in that issue!

Captain America and Bucky briefly returned to comics in YOUNG MEN #24, cover-dated December, 1953. Cap's own book was then revived beginning with issue #76 the following year, but it was canceled again only two issues later. It was too soon to revive the super hero genre.

In 1961 super heroes returned to the company once known as Timely when Stan Lee and Jack Kirby launched FANTASTIC FOUR #1, which introduced a new version of the Human Torch. Sub-Mariner soon followed, so it was inevitable that Captain America would also be reborn in Timely's new incarnation of Marvel Comics. To set the stage, Stan had a villain named the Acrobat masquerade as Captain


BUCKY'S GONE!! THE PLANE IS DESTROYED!!
IT WAS ZEMO-- WHO KILLED HIM!!
BUT WHY--AM I REMEMBERING NOW--HOW I WAS FROZEN IN THE ICE-- AND FINALLY FOUND--AND BROUGHT BACK TO LIFE--BY THE AVENGERS?!!
IT HAPPENED SO MANY YEARS AGO!
WAIT! IT--IT'S COMING BACK TO ME!
THE PANTHER AND I--WE WERE CAPTURED--BY ZEMO!! THEN HIT WITH HIS RAY!
I--MUST HAVE BEEN-- UNCONSCIOUS!



America to battle the Human Torch in STRANGE TALES #115, cover dated November, 1963. Having thus established in the minds of new Marvel fans there was a great hero of the past they had not met, it was time to bring back the real Captain America.

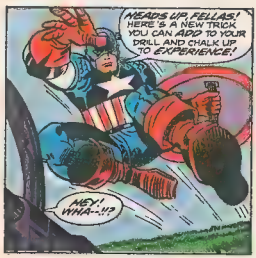
He finally arrived in AVENGERS #4, cover dated March, 1964, found in suspended animation within a block of ice by the Avengers themselves, in a story by Lee and Kirby. On reviving, Cap revealed that he had suffered this fate in the final days of World War II in Europe, plunging into the frigid seas after a drone plane launched by his Nazi foe, Baron Zemo, had exploded, killing Bucky. (Hence, Stan and Jack ignored all the Captain America stories published after World War II. Later writers would reveal that the Captain Americas in those stories were not the original, but three successors, each of whom had a brief career. There were also two subsequent Buckys, the second of whom is still active today as Nomad, and even the Red skull of the postwar tales turned out to be an impostor!)

Cap was welcomed into the Avengers as a full member, and quickly became the dramatic center of the book. Stan and Jack's Captain America was passionately devoted to justice, but haunted by guilt, blaming himself for Bucky's death. Furthermore, their Cap was a man out of his proper time, a stranger in a world that had changed radically in but twenty years. The running theme through the rest of the Lee/Kirby collaborations on THE AVENGERS was Cap's quest for vengeance against Zemo, the man he held responsible for Bucky's death. Zemo finally paid with his life toward the end of Kirby's run.

In the very next issue the original Avengers all resigned from the team, leaving Captain America as the star of the book, leading and training the team's three new hot tempered recruits: Hawkeye, Quicksilver, and the Scarlet Witch. "Cap's Kooky Quartet" proved to be a success, and, although Cap has come and gone from THE AVENGERS over the following decades, he remains an important part of the series to this day.

Cap guest-starred with Iron Man in TALES OF SUSPENSE #58, and, with the following issue, cover dated November, 1964, he once more had his own continuing series, this time by the team of Lee and Kirby. Starting with issue #63 Stan and Jack began a series of tales set in World War II, a number of which were reworkings of classic Golden Age Simon and Kirby CAPTAIN AMERICA stories. It was through these issues that the Red Skull was introduced to a modern day audience.

But the series moved back into the present with issue #72, as Cap faced the Sleepers, doomsday machines left as the legacy of the supposedly deceased Skull. Subsequent stories plunged Cap into the James Bondian world of SHIELD, pitting him against the subversive organization, AIM, the nearly invincible Super-Adaptoid, and Cap's French rival, Batroc the Leaper. Stan and Jack also introduced Cap's first modern day love interest, Sharon Carter, alias SHIELD Agent 13, a woman who could hold her own in combat alongside him.



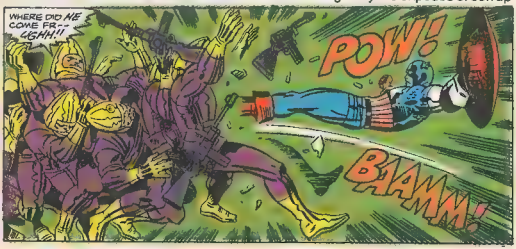
Inevitably, the Red Skull himself finally invaded the present day in TALES OF SUSPENSE #79, beginning one of the greatest of all Marvel epics, in which the Nazi madman first gained control of the Cosmic Cube, a power object that could transform his every wish into horrifying reality. In defeating the Skull through sheer courage and determination, Captain America won perhaps his most memorable victory. (The Lee-Kirby CAPTAIN AMERICA stories from TALES OF SUSPENSE, running through the Cosmic Cube trilogy, are being reprinted this year as a volume in the MARVEL MASTERWORKS series.)

Torn between his sense of duty and his longing to lead a normal life, married to Sharon, Steve Rogers abandoned his Captain America career in issue #95, only to resume it only one issue, later, when he saw how the many people trying to take his place were in danger of being killed by criminals. This was only the first time Steve would give up being Captain America. Each decade he has done the same, each time for radically different reasons specific to the time in which the stories take place.

Cap finally took over all of TALES OF SUSPENSE, which was renamed CAPTAIN AMERICA with issue #100, cover dated April, 1968. Stan Lee and Jack Kirby remained the creative team on the series for the first ten issues. Following that came the classic three-parter by Stan Lee and Jim Steranko first pitting Cap against Madame Hydra, who is today known as the Viper, interrupted by a Lee/Kirby "album issue" (#112) that officially placed the Simon and Kirby CAPTAIN AMERICA stories of the 1940s into Marvel continuity via flashbacks. (During the mid-1960's, many of the Simon/Kirby tales were reprinted in Marvel's first FANTASY MASTERPIECES series.) Gene Colan joined Stan on CPA with issue #116, and the following issue introduced the Falcon, one of comics' first black heroes, who remained Cap's partner for many years to come. Stan continued to script the book through issue #141, cover dated September, 1971.

Steve Englehart was the principal writer on CAPTAIN AMERICA in the 1970s, running from issue #153 to issue #186, the third longest stint any writer has had with the character. He mainly worked with artist Sal Buscema on the series, although he also collaborated memorably with Frank Robbins toward the end of his run.

Englehart's most memorable storyline of this period was inspired by the Watergate scandals in the Nixon administration and their aftermath, a time when much of the nation was shocked and outraged by the exposés of corrup-



tion at high levels of government. In reponse, Englehart concocted a story in which Captain America uncovered a conspiracy by the Secret Empire to overthrow constitutional rule in the United States. Finally, having smashed the plot, Cap pursued the hooded leader into the Oval Office of the White House, only to be horrified to learn his true identity just before he committed suicide. It was left to the reader's imagination to guess who the leader might be. But the truth so shook Captain America's faith in the American political system that he abandoned his super hero identity for the second time. This time, however, instead of retiring from crimefighting, he adopted a new costumed identity, that of the original Nomad. Steve Rogers retained the Nomad identity for many issues, until, finally he reassumed the role of Captain America in response to the murder of a boy who tried to become his successor as Cap by—who else? —the Red Skull.

Jack Kirby returned to CAPTAIN AMERICA, this time as both writer and penciler, with issue #193, cover dated January, 1976, the start of America's bicentennial year. This final Kirby run on the series was far different than anything we had seen before, as he introduced wildly experimental storylines and characters. Kirby also wrote and drew a special giant-size tabloid, CAPTAIN AMERICA's BICENTENNIAL BATTLES, which sent Cap on a tour through American history.

The 1970s also saw Cap get a brand-new series, THE INVADERS, created by Roy Thomas and Frank Robbins, which presented new adventures of Captain America, Bucky, the Sub-Mariner, and the original Human Torch and Toro, set during World War II. The Red Skull made an appearance, of course, as did many other heroes and villains of the Timely Comics of the 1940s.

Early in the 1980s came the brief but excellent run of stories in CAPTAIN AMERICA written by Roger Stern and penciled by John Byrne. They introduced a major new love interest for Cap in the person of Bernadette Rosenthal, a young woman very much of the present day, whose perspective contrasted interestingly with those of Steve Rogers, a man born decades before she was. Roger and John filled out more of Cap's background, enlarging upon his origin tale and depicting his very first mission. (The Stern and Byrne stories are also being reprinted this year as a trade paperback.)

Thereafter came the team of writer J. Marc DeMatteis and Mike Zeck, who pitted Cap against the son of Baron Zemo and against the original Deathlok, a "super-soldier" from the future. But perhaps the best work by DeMatteis and Zeck on the series was their "final" battle, exploring the Skull's early life in flashback in copious and eerie detail.

Shortly afterward Mark Gruenwald, who had edited the DeMatteis stories, took over the reins of writer on CAPTAIN AMERICA himself, and he continues in that post today, in what is now the longest run on the series by any writer except Stan Lee himself. Mark has worked with several artists on the series: Kieron Dwyer recently completed an admirable term on the book, to be succeeded by the current penciler, Ron Lim.

Like Englehart, Mark has the present American political landscape of his time on the book and created characters and situations that comment on what he sees. Thus Cap has encountered new villains like the lawless vigilante Scourge, the anti-nationalistic Flag-Smasher, the corporate-style mercenaries known as the Serpent Society, and the right-wing extremists calling themselves the Watchdogs. Most recently, Mark has placed Cap at the forefront of the war against drugs.

Like those of both Stan Lee and Steve Englehart, one of the best ways of characterizing Mark's tenure on the series is by examining how and why he had Steve Rogers give up his role as Captain America. This is probably Mark's most memorable and best longterm CAP storyline to date, and it took two years in all. This time Steve Rogers felt obliged to give up his other identity, not due to a desire to lead a normal life, nor though disillusionment, but because he would not risk compromising his ideals. Pressured by the Commission on Superhuman Activities to become an agent working directly under government supervision, Steve Rogers quit lest he be ordered to do something that would violate his own conscience. Steve eventually took on another new identity, that of "the Captain," while the Commission chose John Walker, formerly known as the Super-Patriot, a believer in "My country, right or wrong," to be the new Captain America. Through showing the moral differences between Rogers and Walker, and how far Walker had to go to live up to Rogers' heritage, Mark more clearly defined what Captain America is, and also drew sharp distinctions between a classic comic book super hero like the original Cap, and a late 1980s-style comics vigilante like Walker.

As always, reports of the Red Skull's death were highly exaggerated, and Mark brought back Cap's eternal nemesis, this time redesigning him for the 1990s. No longer was the Skull simply trying to revive the long-dead Third Reich of Nazi Germany. Now the Skull masqueraded as a powerful American businessman, secretly supporting subversives like the Watchdogs and Scourge, seeking to develop an American brand of fascism rather than impose one designed for the Germany of the 1930s.

After clashing with the Skull, Steve Rogers again reassumed the role of Captain America, while John Walker, who had become unexpectedly popular in his own right, took on the new identity of the USAgent. Walker is one of a very large supporting cast that Mark has created for the series over the past few years, including Diamondback, who has evolved from a somewhat comical villainess into a sympathetic heroine and major potential love interest for Cap.

This article only recounts Cap's adventures in the comic book medium. We will leave it to others to tell you about the CAPTAIN AMERICA movie serial of the 1940s, his animated TV show of the 1960s, the later live action TV-movie, and finally, his theatrical movie that is to come out later this year. Captain America has traveled far and wide since he made his debut a half-century ago. But just as Cap himself has remained young all these decades, so has the spirit of the character and his stories. Just you watch: fifty years from now, other characters in popular culture who are wildly popular now will be forgotten, and Captain America will still be around, as inspiring as ever.

—Peter Sanderson

THE MANY FACES OF . . .

WONDER MAN™

Over the years, not many characters have had as many new looks as Simon Williams, a.k.a Wonder Man. Much of the credit for this ever changing Avenger can be given to artists John Byrne and George Perez. Back in the seventies, it seemed that every few issues or so poor Simon's duds were torn to shreds in battle. These unfortunate circumstances left Wonder Man in desperate need of clothing. The result was often, a new costume.

—*Tom Daning*

1. **Al Milgrom/Joe Sinnott** (AVENGERS W.C. #1)
2. **George Perez/Pablo Marcos** (AVENGERS #161)
3. **Bob Hall/Brett Breeding** (AVENGERS W.C. Ltd Series #2)
4. **John Buscema** (AVENGERS #131)
5. **Jack Kirby/Dick Ayers** (AVENGERS #9)
6. **Paul Ryan** (AVENGERS W.C. #62)
7. **George Perez/Joe Sinnott** (AVENGERS #192)
8. **John Byrne/Pablo Marcos** (AVENGERS #165
9. **John Byrne/Paul Ryan** (AVENGERS W.C. #54)
10. **Jack Kirby/Frank Giacola/ John Romita** (AVENGERS #156)
11. **George Perez/Terry Austin** (AVENGERS #168)
12. **Sal Buscema/Pablo Marcos** (AVENGERS #158)
13. **Al Milgrom/Joe Sinnott** (AVENGERS W.C. #12)

THE MARVEL AGE® OF COMICS 1982

PART FIVE

Sometimes heroes are ahead of their time. Sometimes it's not until years later that the comic public realizes the chance they had to enjoy something really revolutionary. What other explanation could there be for the 1982 cancellation of—DENNIS THE MENACE?

Other heroes, however, without Dennis's unique philosophy and visual flair, continued to thrive in '82. The biggest hit in fandom was, of course, DAREDEVIL, whose adventures as chronicled by Frank Miller and Klaus Janson were chapters of comic history. One issue even made history in the Congressional Record, as DD #179 was cited for its clear depiction of the evils of smoking!

But Daredevil faced more lethal threats than the tobacco lobby—most especially Elektra, whom Matt Murdock may have still loved despite the threat that she posed to Ben Urich! DD also defeated the Kingpin's machinations to elect his own personal stooge to the New York Mayor's office, by engaging in a bit of hostage exchange with the Kingpin's wife, Vanessa, now traumatized to the level of a street derelict.

The Kingpin would let no man get the better of him, though, and unleashed his assassin, Elektra, against Foggy Nelson for revenge . . . a revenge that was ultimately foiled when Bullseye returned to kill Elektra for taking his place as Kingpin's assassin! Elektra's death would haunt Matt for months, years to come . . . unless the Hand succeeded in their efforts to bring her back to life!

DD would earn no rest, though, as the Punisher returned to deal death to those who deal in drugs. (His conflict with Daredevil has since been reprinted in the trade paperback "Child's Play.") And when Kirigi, master assassin of the Hand, also returned, Daredevil needed major league help—from the Black Widow (sporting a bold, new look) and the man who originally trained Matt in his hypersenses, the enigmatic Stick!

Miller's DAREDEVIL was so focal a comics event that we could devote this entire column to its details, but then we'd be in dutch with the invincible IRON MAN! Comics veteran Denny O'Neil inherited the scripting reins of the Golden Avenger, and with new artist Luke McDonnell, made Shell-Head the enemy of a sinister conspiracy that would gradually strip from him every shred of his very identity! Who was behind the mysterious Chessmen, as well as the beauty who had wrapped Tony Stark around her little finger, the exotic Indries Moomji? The IRON MAN ANNUAL provided no clues; it was too full of savage battle from the likes of Mandarin, Killmonger, and Madame Slay!

The INCREDIBLE HULK celebrated his 20the anniversary in 1982; but somewhat to his disappointment he shared his celebration issue with that interstellar imp, Rocket Racoon. There was even greater cause for celebration later in the year, though, as the Hulk finally gained Bruce Banner's mind!

The intelligent Hulk battled old enemies like the Leader (in the HULK ANNUAL), the Insectoids and the U-Foes, and finally won an unbelievable legal coup: Presidential amnesty! All of the Hulk's misdeeds over the years were forgiven as Bruce banner made the green goliath a hero at last, the toast of the super-community and the pride of the nation. This revelry and merriment, however, failed to save MARVEL SUPER HEROES from cancellation, halting the reprinting of the Hulk's older adventures.

With Roger Stern at the scripting helm, the GHOST RIDER'S adventures recaptured the power and intensity of the series' early issues. But that was all to the worse for Johnny Blaze's friends at the Quentin Carnival, which perished in flames when the Ghost Rider's insatiable need for vengeance rose to the surface.

Vengeance was also on the mind of Morgan LeFay, whose hatred for SPIDER-WOMAN knew no bounds. Jessica Drew faced a slew of Marvel's most dangerous villains under scripter Chris Claremont—the viper, Silver Samurai, Mandroids, and the Kingpin. But at year's end, the book resumed the patented weirdness of its earlier days, with the scripting debut of future DAREDEVIL doyenne, Ann Nocenti!

Spider-Woman graciously made a

MARVEL® COMICS PRICE GUIDE

It's tough when your folks frown on your comic addiction, discouraging, denying, and even throwing out your precious comics collectibles. And so we're dedicating this sidebar to Robert Overstreet's parents, who made it possible, ion their way, for us to give you this monthly guide to current comics specialty shop prices, drawn from (where else?) Robert Overstreet's THE COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE #19. But remember, mom and dad; this is only a guide. Actual prices may vary, and should be lower for comics in fair or poor condition.

	CONDITION		
	Good	Fine	Mint
■ CONAN THE BARBARIAN			
130-141		.50	1.00
ANNUAL 7		.60	1.20
■ DAREDEVIL			
178-180 (Elektra)	.50	1.50	3.00
181 (double-size) Elektra dies)	.60	1.75	3.50
182-184 (Punisher)	1.00	3.00	6.00
185-189	.25	.75	1.50
■ DAZZLER			
11-22		.50	1.00
■ DENNIS THE MENACE			
3-13		.25	.50
■ GHOST RIDER			
64-75		.50	1.00
■ INCREDIBLE HULK			
267-271, 273-278		.60	1.20
278 (Alpha Flight)	.40	1.25	2.50
■ IRON MAN			
154-165		.60	1.20
ANNUAL 5	.25	.75	1.50
■ KING CONAN			
9-13	.35	1.00	2.00
■ MARVEL SUPER-HEROES			
105		.50	1.00
■ ROM			
26-30		.45	.90
31-37		.40	.80
ANNUAL 1		.60	1.20
■ SPIDER-WOMAN			
42-47	.60	1.25	
■ THOR			
315-326		.50	1.00
ANNUAL 10	.25	.75	1.50

guest appearance in the pages of DAZZLER, assisting Alison Blaire in her search for her mother. After bouts with everyone from the Enchantress to Dr. Octopus to Rouge, Dazz made a grand singing debut at Carnegie Hall, attended by every luminary in the superheroic community. (Get it? Luminary? Sorry.)

Also encountering Rogue, along with the rest of the Sisterhood of Evil Mutants, was ROM, whose struggle against the Dire Wraiths took him around the universe in eighty issues (give or take an issue). Wraith magic reared its ugly head in England, in Atlantis, and in outer space. But there were more threats than just the Spaceknight's age-old enemies. . .the worst of which was that ol' planet-eater himself, Galactus! Rom outwitted the big G but paid dearly for it, as Galactus hid Rom's home planet in the darkest recesses of space!

THOR, on the other hand, was far more down to Earth. . .1982 was a year the Thunder God spent largely among us mortals of Migard. Thor's direst challenge came in the THOR ANNUAL, as he sparred with Demogorge, the God-Eater! The remainder of the year saw him tackling such lesser lights as the Zaniac, the Bi-Beast, and the Scarlet Scarab. (No, Zaniac, we didn't mean it that way. . .put down that knife!)

KING CONAN adventured into unknown realms with his son, Conn, as Doug Moench ably filled the sizable shoes left behind by Roy Thomas. The 1982 CONAN ANNUAL did feature Roy's adaptation of the novel, "Conan of the Isles" though. And in his flagship book, CONAN THE BARBARIAN enjoyed the attentions of such creators as J.M. De Matteis, Bruce Jones, and Gil Kane, and battled the gamut of wizards, snake-goddesses and giant spiders.

And so ends our '82 review, and just in time! We've got to gear up for the 1983 retrospective, to cover one of Marvel's. . .nay, one of publishing itself's greatest landmarks that year: the debut of MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE! (Never let it be said we don't know how to blow our own horn!)

—Brian Nelson

New Talent Department
Poyee P. Kung

Greetings and salutations! And welcome to another exciting installment of the Mighty MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE New Talent Department, where we dare to ask that musical question: Is there new talent beyond the Great White North?

Nowadays, it seems like every submission we receive for this distinguished showcase of up-and-coming young artists is from Canada. And Poyee P. Kung is no exception. Hailing all the way from Neapean, Ontario, Poyee shows great promise as a new comics artist. To prove our claim, we exacted the adept eye of resident Managing Art Director, Sizzlin' Steve Geiger. Take it away, Steve.

"Poyee's storytelling is good. He might consider using more black tones and dark areas. This would heighten the sense of drama that he is trying to

present. Also helping to achieve this effect would be the use of more severe angles.

"Although his figures are a little stiff, Poyee presents a good fight sequence. He could use a bit of work on the anatomy.

"On the last page of the story, there is good intensity. Slightly larger figures and, again, more severe angles would serve to heighten the drama.

"Finally, Poyee's composition is okay, but could use improvement. All-in-all, however, I think he's only about a year of practice and hard work away from getting steady comic work."

Thanks, Steve, for those words of wisdom. We're sure Poyee will benefit immensely from your expertise.

And that brings us to the end of another New Talent showcase. But remember, if you are interested in becoming an artist for Marvel, get your Marvel submissions guidelines by writing to:

Submissions Editor
Marvel Comics
387 Park Avenue South
New York, NY 10016

HOW DO YOU STOP THE RHINO FROM CHARGING?

TAKE AWAY HIS CREDIT CARD!

Send your letters to: MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE, c/o Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc., 387 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016

Attention correspondents:
All letters to be considered for publication must include your name and address though we will gladly withhold that info by request.

Take this month's letter column title. . . please! That's what we did, straight from jolly Randy Vanden Heuvel of Oneida, NY. Thanks, Randy! And here's one for you in return: Why does Reed Richards wear red suspenders? To counteract the effects of gravity on his lower garments and maintain them in a state of equilibrium! Ha ha ha—that one kills us.

And don't forget—we can always use a good laugh, each and every month. So if you've got an idea for a jazzy new name for this column, send it on in! If we use it, we'll even print your name in this very space to say "thanks." And that sure beats a pie in the face, doesn't it?

Dear Gang at Marvel,

I enjoy reading comics such as SPIDER-MAN, THE X-MEN, X-FACTOR, THE PUNISHER, and WOLVERINE, and I have a few questions about some of your characters:

1) In the early years of THE X-MEN, Hank McCoy (a.k.a the Beast) used to have skin. When did he grow fur?

2) Is Scott Summers blind, and what shoots out of his eyes?

3) What kind of powers does the Silver Surfer have?

4) What happened to Nightcrawler and Colossus after the X-Men?

Keep up the good work, gang!

Matthew Conza
804 Home St.
Elmont, NY 11003

We'll do our best, Matthew. And we'll start by answering your questions. Taking them in order:

1) The Beast's terminally hirsute appearance came about shortly after Hank left the X-Men. Hank had been trying to isolate the genetic cause of mutation, but no sooner had he reached his goal than criminals broke into the lab. The only way Hank could keep them from stealing the serum he had created was to drink it, thus causing his mutant body to mutate even further! As a result, he wound up with a bestial form that's the envy of the Hair Club for Men. The whole story was published in the early 1970s in AMAZING ADVENTURES #11.

2) Nope, Scott can see just fine. He wears those special ruby quartz glasses to control the powerful optic beams that would otherwise shoot forth from his eyes and destroy everything he looked at (which would make it awfully hard for him to read the Sunday paper, wouldn't it?).

3) The Silver Surfer's powers stem from his control over cosmic energy, which gives him great strength and allows him to fire energy blasts, alter matter, and do a whole lot of other parlor tricks. Also, he can ride his high-flying surfboard through the vast reaches of space. Cowabunga!

4) Nightcrawler is currently a member of Excalibur, and you can find his adventures in that team's series every month. Colossus is now a noted artist, but he suffers from amnesia and remembers nothing about his armor-plated alter-ego. When (and even if) he'll regain his memory remains an open question. We'll just have to wait and see. . .

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

Only a few things make the ride worthwhile: some love, some music, an episode of *Fawlty Towers*, and last but not least. . .Marvel Comics. (How's that for an intro?)

In 1978, I had my first (indirect) contact with Marvel when THE INCREDIBLE HULK (starring Bill Bixby) was shown on TV. A few months later, I bought my first Marvel comic book, THE INCREDIBLE HULK #189.

Now it's 1990, I'm twenty years old, and I have about 2460 Marvel comic books. I'm collecting sixteen titles (ten Dutch and six American), including MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE, of course.

I have one question: What is/was your most successful comic book of all time? (I don't mean what series, but rather, what particular issue.) I'm very, very, very curious if you've ever reached the magic number of one million copies. (I have a hunch the answer will be FANTASTIC FOUR #1, MARVEL SUPER HEROES SECRET WARS #1, THE UNCANNY X-MEN #200, or WOLVERINE (the limited series) #1.

Bart Pirard
Oliemolenstraat 20
8320 Brugge 4
West-Vlaanderen
BELGIUM

Funny thing you should ask, Bart. Because the answer to your question isn't any of the issues you guessed; in fact, it's probably a comic book that came out not too long ago. Wouldja believe that the recent SPIDER-MAN #1 by Todd McFarlane has sold, not one million, but well over *two million* copies?! And some of those copies weren't even sold to Todd's relatives! Heck, if that isn't good enough to make the *Guiness Book of World Records* (or at least *The Forbush Guide to Really Impressive Sales*), then we don't know what is.

Dear Marvel,

Think about it. When you put Wolverine in MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #1-10, everybody wanted them. Now you've put him in again and everybody wants them!

So I was thinking: You know how you put Spidey permanently in MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS?

Like everybody says, "Make Marvel Mine!"

Jesse Thompson
752 Manassa R.D.
Howell, NJ 07736

Gee, Jesse, the only people we know who say "Make Marvel Mine" are high-powered business execs who want to buy out the company. But even if you're not in the mood to put up the countless millions that such a move would require, your wish is still our command. From now on, you'll be able to get your regular fix of claw-slashin' action every two weeks in the pages of MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS! How's that for service?

Dear Marvel Comics,

I just wanted to write to say how much I love your comics and to ask a few questions.

First, I'd like to know if you guys keep a library of all the comics you print. If so, how long have you done it?

Next, I'd like to know how the logo of a comic book is printed. There is no way an artist could make it perfect on every cover. I've seen an original cover drawing with the logo, price, UPC code, etc. pasted on the drawing itself. Also, while I'm on the subject, how much would the color key of a cover be worth compared to the original artwork?

Do you guys edit letters to conserve space in your letter columns. Ever since Stan left the position of editor-in-chief, they aren't run as often.)

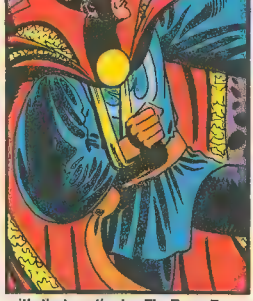
Finally, I'd like to offer a piece of advice to Chris Claremont and other writers. I think I speak for a lot of people when I say this: Try to change the way you write your characters' dialogue. What I'm talking about is the way you have everyone use the same slang terms and sayings. I'm sure not all men will say "Yum" when they see a pretty woman. I'm not telling you how to do your job, but it gets annoying sometimes.

Thanks for reading this letter and thanks for making so many great comic books.

Chad Disbennett
(Address withheld by request)

Boy, Chad, between you and Matthew, we've sure got an awful lot of questions to answer this month! Let's see . . .

Yes, Marvel does indeed maintain a library of the comic books it publishes. It's missing a few issues here and there, and some comic books are represented only by Xerox copies of the originals, but it pretty much covers the entire Marvel Age of Comics. But before we start getting deluged with requests for library cards, we should note that access to the library is *not* available to the general public, just to the folks who work here. The reason for that should be obvious after a moment's thought: The whole point for our holding on to these comic books is so that we have easy access to reference on just about anything and anybody in the Marvel Universe. If an artist needs to know how many fingers Fin Fang Foom had on his right hand, for example, the editor can pull out the appropriate volume and send the artist a Xerox of a page from a story about the character. This means that we need to keep a fairly close eye on the comic books. And if we had to worry about keeping track of the countless thousands of patrons who might have borrowed the issue



with that particular Fin Fang Foom story, it would defeat the whole purpose of having the library in the first place.

As for how a logo is printed, you've pretty much hit the nail on the head. Artists don't try to redraw each logo on every cover. Instead, they leave room at the top of the cover so that a photostat of the logo can be pasted down to let people know that they've picked up the latest copy of THE UNCANNY X-MEN and not FUN WITH PATSY AND HEDY. After the comic book is published, the origi-

nal artwork is returned to the artist and often turns up for sale, as do the color keys (on occasion). We've generally seen artwork sell for more than color keys, but the actual prices vary. As with most everything, color keys are basically worth whatever people are willing to pay for them.

Turning to your question about the letter column, we try to avoid editing letters whenever possible. But sometimes, we'll come across a letter that says something that we think a lot of people will be interested in, even though the letter is simply too long to print in its entirety. In those cases, we will edit the letter, although we try to make sure that we haven't inadvertently affected what its writer said in the process. Still, though, we'd rather not edit your letters at all (even for space), so please, folks, when you write in, limit your letter to one page (either handwritten or typed and double-spaced). We'll thank you . . . and so will the rain forests!

And on that ecologically-minded note, we'll bid you all adieu for yet another month. But not, of course, before we say "Bienvenue" to another heaping helping of MARVEL CORRESPONDENTS, those guys and gals from exotic locales who are on the lookout for friends, Romans, and countrymen to whom they can lend their ears! Go ahead and drop one or two of them a line. After all, they're here to praise you, not bury you!

MARVEL CORRESPONDENTS

If you'd like to appear in this space yourself, send your name, address, age, and the titles of your three favorite Marvel series to Marvel Correspondents at the address atop this letter column. It sure beats suffering the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune!

Leslie Lee
Apt. Block 95
Old Airport Road
#01-171
Singapore 1439
Age: 16
Favorites: X-MEN, X-FACTOR, POWER PACK

Tom Speckels
Box 6021
Big Springs, TX 79721
Age: 14
Favorites: DAREDEVIL, WEB OF SPIDER-MAN, NEW MUTANTS

John Lee
Start Rt. Lee's La.
Shepherdsville, KY 40165
Age: 15
Favorites: POWER PACK, X-MEN, FANTASTIC FOUR

Nocholas Smith
2103 Pleasantview Lane
Bellevue, Nebraska 68005
Age: 14
Favorites: X-FACTOR, X-MEN, AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

Matt Reeve
RR #3
Milton, Ontario
L9T 2X7 Canada
Age: 13
Favorites: PUNISHER, X-MEN, AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

Darren Barefoot
63 Glenmore Dr.
Vancouver, British Columbia
V7S-1A5 Canada
Age: 14
Favorites: ALPHA FLIGHT, X-MEN, NEW MUTANTS

Joel Johnson
349 Burr Street
Battle Creek, MI 49015
Age: 14
Favorites: SILVER SURFER, THE 'NAM, CAPTAIN AMERICA

Mike McCullough
5708 Kennedy St.
Riverdale, MD 20737
Age: 23
Favorites: DAREDEVIL, IRON MAN, X-MEN

Josh Zerkel
19961 Waltham
Birmingham, MI 48009
Age: 11
Favorites: X-MEN, X-FACTOR, SPIDER-MAN

Victor J. Vazquez
20142 N.W. 42 Ct.
Miami, Florida 33055
Age: 17
Favorites: ALPHA FLIGHT, WEST COAST AVENGERS, X-FACTOR

There's that telltale yellow again! And that can mean only one of two things: Either the corn is as high as an elephant's eye, or it's time for our LETTER OF THE MONTH! Yup, once again, we've tirelessly sorted through our vast sacks of mail to find a letter (or in this case, two letters) that we think will be of particular interest to Marvelmaniacs far and wide. This month's topic is one you might have considered yourself on occasion. In fact, you might say it's "age-old" . . .

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

Why don't characters ever age? They can die, but they cannot age?

My father says Doctor Strange is the same as he was in the '60s. He says whatever incantations Doctor Strange uses to keep young, let him know!

Harold Hanna
(Address withheld by request)

Dear Marvel (or whoever wants to answer my questions),

I read a lot of Marvel Comics, and as I read these comics I always wonder about the super heroes' and villains' ages. I know for a fact that some titles have been around for a long time, such as THE FANTASTIC FOUR, CAPTAIN AMERICA, THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN, and THE INCREDIBLE HULK (just to name a few), and I want to know how super heroes who have been around for so long can still beat up the bad guys like they're all in their twenties.

Andres Echevarria
109 Woods Dr.
Dudley, NC 28333

Well, guys, to be fair, there are *some* Marvel characters who age just as quickly as those of us in the real world. THE 'NAM, for example, is set in real time, which means that every time a month passes for them.

In fact, even among our super heroes and super-villains, it's not quite true that Marvel characters *never* age. Take Peter Parker, for instance. Pete was in high school when he first became Spider-Man, and now, he's graduated from college, completed a year or two of graduate school, and even gotten married. Of course, it *has* taken him more than twenty-five years to do all of that, so it's clear that he (like most Marvel characters) ages a lot more slowly than the rest of us.

There are a number of reasons for the characters' slow aging process, but mainly, it allows us to use them in a whole lot more stories before they get old and have to retire their capes forever. But if you think about it, time *has* to move more slowly in comic books, because if one issue ends on a cliffhanger, wouldn't you want the next month's issue to show you what happened next on that day instead of jumping ahead to what happened a month later?

Still, though, our favorite account of how comic book characters age is probably the tongue-in-cheek explanation that Weezie Mason gave in an issue of SHE-HULK: As long as a character is appearing in an ongoing series, he or she will barely age. But as soon as the character's series is canceled, watch out—they'll age just as quickly as the rest of us!

ANSWERS TO MARVEL TRIVIA QUIZ

1. B	5. A	9. B
2. C	6. C	10. B
3. B	7. B	11. C
4. D	8. B	12. D

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(continued from inside front cover)

series from TALES OF SUSPENSE. Elsewhere in this issue you'll also find full details about the deluxe 2-volume CAPTAIN AMERICA boxed set, re-presenting all the classic Simon and Kirby issues of the original Timely series. But wait there's more, such as the FIGHTING AMERICAN volume released last year. But the biggest news has to be the release of the full color Captain America print by Jack Kirby, limited to 950 copies all signed and numbered by the King himself. That's right, Jack's back to celebrate Cap's 50th in a big way! But these high-quality prints, published on acid free 120 pound Archival Art Stock, and presented in acid free envelopes sealed with special Gold Commemorative Seals, and each embossed with an image of Captain America, don't come cheap. They're $185.00 U.S. each, which includes shipping and handling from:

First Team Press, Inc.
Box 994, Lewiston, NY 14092

You can even call 1-800-FOR-LITHOS for further information.

Whoops, didn't mean to get carried away like that. Let's just say that if it wasn't for Jack's efforts, there probably wouldn't be a Marvel Comics today.

Jack Kirby—we thank you for all your work over the years, and for your co-operation this issue. We salute you, and respectfully dedicate this issue to you.

—*Jim Salicrup*

(Just enough room left to welcome Andy Mangels to our pages. Andy will be examining Marvel's many forays into other media, and we're sure his column will be an exciting addition to our award-winning rag, er, I mean, mag.)

THE 1990 MARVEL AGE® CALENDAR

NOVEMBER

WRITERS: CHRIS ELIOPOLOUS AND BARRY DUTTER
ARTIST: RON ZALME
COLORIST: R. WITTERSTAETTER

AY
WEDNESDAY
THURSDAY
FRIDAY
SATURDAY
IT'S JIM GALTON'S B-DAY!
WHO'S HE?
1
I DUNNO. I THINK HE WORKS IN THE MAILROOM.
YESTERDAY WAS HOWIE POST'S B-DAY!
3
HEY, THE POST-MAN ALWAYS RINGS TWICE!
BY CROM-- IT'S RODNEY RAMOS' B-DAY!!
18
HELP!
SWOOF!
9
TOMORROW IS CARL POTTS' BIRTHDAY!
10
I LIKE IT!
R AT A AME...
HOLY COW! DID YOU SEE THAT PLAY?!
14
COULDN'T MISS IT.
IT'S REPRO DEPT. STU SCHWARTZBERG'S BIRTHDAY!
15
IT'S REPRO DEPT.'S JOHN LEWANDOWSKI'S B-DAY!
16
THANKS FER TH' CAKE, PAL!
RIGHT.
17
HEY! DON'T FORGET FACILITIES ADMINISTRATOR SUSAN EHRENREICH'S B-DAY ON NOV 4!!!
21
HAPPY THANKSGIVING!
22
THE 5th BEATLE...
23
I WAS THEIR SECOND-BEST CHOICE.
24
27
SURE-- IT'S NEW MILK-OF-MAGNETO!
28
29
THOR PLAYS FETCH WITH HIS DOG--
30
KLOP!
31
FETCH, MJOL-MUTT!
KLUK!